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ABSTRACT

This handbook on participative learning is designed for workers involved in community and adult education programs, staff development, and youth, community, and social work organizations. The introduction explores a theoretical basis for participative learning and defines terms. Chapter 1 examines program planning issues and includes some useful checklists. Chapter 2 addresses mixing the group, selecting warm-up exercises, networking, and developing facilitating skills. Chapter 3 promotes thinking about community work values and the stages involved in a community work approach. Exercises encourage participants to share their understanding and practice and to consider the links between this practice and the underlying aims of community work. Exercises in Chapter 4 provide a structure for examining work with community groups, developing a theoretical approach, and recording experience. Chapter 5 explores the purpose and functions of committees. Exercises encourage participants to share experiences of committees, examine roles and desirable qualities of officers and members, and tackle relevant problems for workers and committee members. Chapter 6 outlines practical ways to keep track of participative learning. The handbook contains over 60 exercises with the following parts: a summary, aims, warm-up exercise; additions or variations, and necessary handouts, worksheets, and working papers. Appendixes include 28 working papers for use in exercises, useful contacts, and 38 useful books. (YLB)

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Learning From Each Other

A handbook for participative learning and community work learning programmes

Kate Sapin

Geraldine Watters

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Learning From Each Other

A Handbook for Participative Learning and Community Work Learning Programmes

by Kate Sapin and Geraldine Watters

The William Temple Foundation
Manchester

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The William Temple Foundation
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Learning Programmes

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FOREWORD

Two of the most important initiatives of the Greater Manchester Community Work Training Group in the seven years since it was established have been the Community Work Learning Programme and the Accreditation Process. These two different complementary routes to the recognition of community work experience have broken new ground in the validation of previous learning. Kate and Geraldine are co-tutors on the Community Work Learning Programme as well as Convenor and Consultant/Assessor on the Accreditation Process respectively. They have been key workers in the development of these initiatives. Their own wide experience of community work has given them an understanding of the frustration experienced by community workers and activists whose skills and knowledge go unrecognised because they have no paper qualifications.

The methods presented in this book are tried, tested and evaluated. In my view the best way to appreciate how effective the participative approach can be is to talk to the participants. When I have, they have described the effects of learning to value themselves and others as extraordinary.

The success of the Community Work Learning Programme, however, does not only rely on the methods used and the input from the participants - but also on the skills, knowledge, experience and understanding of the tutors. Kate and Geraldine have a fundamental respect for participants and belief in their abilities. This contributes as much to their success with the programmes as their considerable skills as community workers and tutors.

The William Temple Foundation, with its particular interest in promoting good community work practice, skills acquisition and empowerment has its own publishing facilities and networks. It thus has been able to ensure that this valuable material reaches a wider audience.

I am sure this book will be useful, stimulating and challenging not only to those in the field of community work, but to anyone genuinely interested in adult learning.

Mary Kenny

Training and Development Worker
Greater Manchester Community Work Training Group

July 1990

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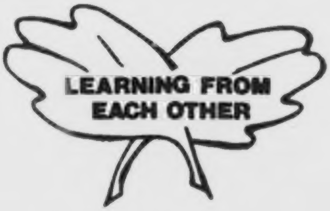

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PREFACE

HOW THIS BOOK CAME ABOUT

We decided to write this book after many years of fieldwork encouraging members of community groups, community workers and other professionals to develop confidence and awareness and gain new skills. Through reflecting on their experience, sharing ideas and building networks, participants have gone from strength to strength. We found that others were interested in the approach, methods and materials we use and we aimed to write a practical book for busy workers which would promote participative learning. The exercises in *Learning From Each Other* are flexible and can be adapted to use with your group as they have been developed, tested and piloted in different settings and with a variety of participants, including:

- experienced community workers and activists on the *Community Work Learning Programme* at the University of Manchester, Department of Extra-Mural Studies.
- management committees and staff teams in non-statutory organisations such as law centres, youth projects, women's projects on team-building committee responsibilities, defining aims and objectives, developing equal opportunities issues.
- local authority, community development and community education teams through consultancy, training and evaluative research.
- Community Work Accreditation Process applicants and assessors on assessment and development of evidence of experience.
- neighbourhood groups on play, youth work, and decentralisation.
- local activists in a range of courses, e.g. counselling skills in community work, equal opportunities practice, housing, women's rights.
- community health workers and community mental health resettlement teams on community work and making contact with the community.
- social studies and social work students in *Social Work Issues In Practice* courses.
- staff in basic, continuing, and further education on accrediting and validating prior learning, designing a needs based curriculum, women and management and portfolio building.

We have learned a lot from working together and hope that you will too. Let us know whether *Learning From Each Other* has helped.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the learning programme **participants** with whom we have worked over the years and who have contributed to the development of **Learning From Each Other**. We particularly thank participants on the *Community Work Learning Programme* for sharing their views, experiences, and ideas for the warm-up exercises.

Thanks to **Kathy Lawson** who first introduced us to each other and who has been a support throughout. A special thank you for passing on the **trees exercise**.

Thanks also to the following who helped with comments, editing and general support: **John Hargreaves, Joyce Hatton, Mary Kenny, Pamela McBride, Louisa McCabe, Judy Stirton**.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The **Introduction** outlines the principles behind a participative learning approach and practical suggestions for putting them into action. We hope that you will read this as it sets the scene for the chapters which follow.

The **overall aims of the community work exercises in *Learning From Each Other*** are:

- to build up the confidence of participants by working from their experience and encouraging them to reflect on and share their learning with others.
- to give participants the opportunity to analyse the role of the community worker in a variety of settings and situations using the experience of the group.
- to encourage participants to develop a planned approach to community work which ensures that community work values are incorporated into everyday practice and that accurate and positive records of work are kept.
- to promote the validation and accreditation of learning from experience through facilitating the development of evidence and methods of assessment.

Using the exercises

Each exercise begins with a summary which should allow you to plan for the practical requirements of the exercise such as space, literacy, mobility, facilities, reproduction and preparation. Time limitations are not given as the time needed for discussion will vary considerably with each group.

The **aims for each exercise** follow the summary. You will need to consider the needs of your group to decide whether a particular exercise is appropriate. Most of the exercises will include a suggestion for a short **warming up** exercise to begin the session with reflection on relevant experience.

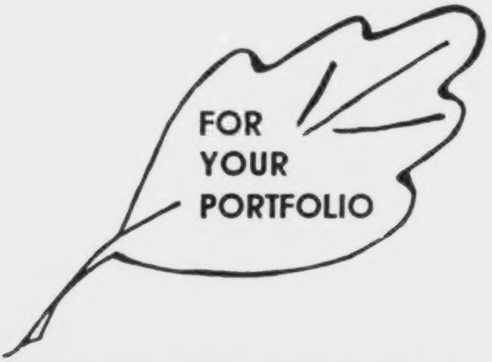
Suggestions for links between exercises will appear at the end of each exercise under **Additions or variations to the exercise**. These also include ways to adapt the exercise for use with different groups.

Handouts, **Worksheets** and **Working Papers** accompany some of the exercises or are included in the **Appendices**. They may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes provided the source is acknowledged.

Flipchart

Copy the text appearing here

The flipchart symbol indicates that the text should be copied on to a flipchart to prompt and focus a discussion or brainstorm. **Issues to raise** or **Points to consider** are included as possible guidelines or prompts for discussion.



The **Portfolio** symbol indicates that written work following the exercise may be useful. Suggestions are given on ways to provide a written record of learning by using the material in the exercise or related additional work. However, tutors should *not* feel that written work is always necessary. The portfolio work is an option only appropriate for some individuals and groups.

Planning a programme

The exercises and chapters are linked but following them in sequence is not necessary. A programme could be designed by selecting individual exercises, or using different ones from several chapters. **Chapter One** ***Nuts and Bolts*** suggests methods of identifying need and planning a programme. **Chapter Six** ***Keeping Track of Participative Learning*** describes ways for tutors and organisers to remain aware of individual and group needs.

INTRODUCTION

A PARTICIPATIVE APPROACH TO LEARNING

What are the principles behind participative learning and how can they be put into practice? The ***Introduction*** explores a theoretical basis for participative learning and what tutors do when using a participative approach. The Introduction looks at how participants' experience can be used and valued in a learning programme – and how they can share their experiences to gain support and learn from each other.

A section entitled **Terms used in the book** defines the terms and techniques employed.

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

Learning From Each Other uses a participative approach to organising and facilitating learning programmes and can be used with any group of adults with experience to share. Three elements underlie the approach: *using the experience of participants as a basis for learning, valuing this experience throughout the programme, and encouraging participants to gain support and learn from each other.* A participative programme is rarely simply a matter of getting people into a room and asking them what they want to do. Building a participative learning group requires a commitment to the approach from everyone involved.

The approach is particularly appropriate in community work learning programmes because the aims and values of the two disciplines are similar. Community work *and* participative learning involve valuing people's skills and qualities, enabling people to take more control, challenging inequalities and working for change. The necessary criteria required for an effective community worker outlined in **Working Paper 19** at the end of the book demonstrate the similarity.

The community work exercises in this book are designed to facilitate recognition and sharing of relevant work and life experience. As participants examine what they have done and accomplished, they are also challenged and stimulated by new or different ideas within the group. Through this analysis, experienced community workers and activists can develop an overview of community work and the critical elements acquired in particular areas of work can be more easily transferred to new situations. Teachers of students with little or no experience of community work should also find the definitions of community work and the organisation of the material useful in planning more directive learning. The points raised by the exercises could be used in a lecture format using examples from the tutor's own experience.

Using the experience of participants

The experience which participants bring with them and continue to develop as a learning programme progresses is used as the foundation on which learning is based. Understanding the relationship between what is being discussed and previous and current experience will help people to make sense of new ideas and information. Reflecting on experience helps participants to form new ideas which are relevant, lasting, and will make significant changes in their attitudes and understanding. The active learning process encourages the development of critical thinking about work: to question and modify habitual practice in the light of new thinking. Rather than wondering where a theory from a taught course fits into work in "real life", participants are developing theories of practice based on the integration of experience and ideas.

A participative programme uses the experience of the group by negotiating the content of sessions, in designing materials based on participants' contributions and by providing a flexible structure that focuses on current issues and problems which are relevant to the group. By consistently integrating equal opportunity issues into session planning, materials and discussions, all participants should find the programme meaningful. Attention to feedback through monitoring and evaluation should provide a check that those taking part find the programme applicable to their situation.

Valuing participants' experience

For a participative programme to succeed, participants need to feel that they have valuable and worthwhile experience to bring to the group. *Valuing* experience is therefore a second element running throughout all aspects of the programme. Through being valued, participants begin to recognise the significance of their experience, feel confident enough to share what they have gone through, and can support as well as challenge others in the group.

Tutors need to use their group work skills carefully as they are integral to this process. Perhaps most importantly, tutors must think about how they present themselves to ensure that they do not create the feeling that they know everything there is to know about the issues under discussion. Participative learning is not a suitable setting for gurus. (See the notes below under **facilitator** and **tutor**.) Instead, tutors will need to link their knowledge of participants' background and experience with the issues under discussion to make sure that they are positively encouraged to take part. For example, a tutor may ask one participant to expand on her experience because it centres on an important aspect of community work, encourage someone else to introduce an area of work mentioned previously, suggest another write up the notes on a flipchart, chair a discussion or report the feedback on behalf of a group.

Monitoring and evaluation can help tutors to pick up when participants feel they are not being valued. An example from one programme we have been involved with illustrates this point: a casual question along the lines of "How do you think the programme is going?" revealed that two participants felt "left out" of the discussion on management committees because they did not work with a formal structure. A flexible schedule meant that a session on issues they were experienced in could be slotted in. They were reassured, felt valued and recognised that they had a lot to offer the group.

A similar problem came to light on a different programme when a participant's report back on progress to the course committee revealed that she was feeling isolated due to a feeling of frustration about her skills in English (which was her second or third language). While the tutors were aware of her feelings, the chance to discuss ways forward in this forum helped the other participants to recognise the depth of her isolation and to make sure that they included her in future discussions.

Valuing participants means involving them in the organisation, management, monitoring and evaluation of the programme and responding to their views. For further examples of monitoring and evaluation techniques, see **Chapter Six: *Keeping Track of Participative Learning***. **Chapter One: *Nuts and Bolts*** includes a section on organising a programme committee and focuses on participant involvement.

Compiling a portfolio of tangible evidence of experience (see the entry under **Portfolios** below) can provide participants with a huge boost of confidence. Tutors can encourage participants to produce and expand records of their work on the programme, for example: notes on sessions they have been involved in facilitating, worksheets they have completed, and comments on the notes from sessions circulated by the tutors. Most of the exercises in *Learning From Each Other* give examples of how the material covered in the session can be worked on individually after the session and used as evidence of learning in a portfolio.

Sharing experience, gaining support and learning from each other

Participants can learn a great deal from each other when their previously entrenched views are challenged and if they develop a receptive approach to other ways of thinking about work. Careful planning and thinking about the group are required to develop an environment in which the members feel safe to learn. Learning from each other will not be easy or enjoyable unless participants respect each other and feel confident enough to air their views and receive feedback from the group. Without this security, only limited participation will take place, and individuals will become very frustrated. Only a few will be confident enough to contribute and the group's dynamics will quickly disintegrate into conflict the first time a provocative issue is raised.

Some participants need to feel that they have time to express themselves and explore their thoughts on an issue. Others have been in a leadership role in a community which has allowed them to express opinions on all matters and go unchallenged. In both cases, individuals need to be encouraged to share their experience and will benefit from being challenged for different reasons.

The tone set in the early stages of any programme will influence the extent to which sharing experience and learning from each other comes about. The start of a programme should concentrate on exercises aimed at helping the group to get to know each other (see **Chapter Two *Getting to Know Each Other***) and building a group identity. The participants' work will involve identifying their strengths, visiting each others' places of work or projects, learning about each other's backgrounds and experience and drawing out common threads of experience and backgrounds.

Using small groups and pairs to work on relevant materials or issues will encourage sharing of experience and the development of support within the group. A brainstorm provides a non-threatening opportunity to share ideas. Participative exercises, such as case studies in pairs and small groups, planning and organising sessions in small groups, getting together information or resource sheets and packs on issues in self-selecting groups, will all help this to come about. Working networks can be established to continue after the programme is finished.

While developing a supportive learning group, challenging may seem low on the agenda. But sharp shocks and challenges will and should occur: being "pulled up short" has an important role in raising awareness of issues. An atmosphere of sharing and support will help the conflicts which do arise to be dealt with positively by the group. For example, many participants resist or feel threatened by discussions of equal opportunity issues. The challenging nature of the programme and support for those experiencing or actively addressing the various oppressions needs to be firmly established as part of the group dynamic from the beginning of the programme.

Building good practice on equal opportunity issues into all areas of work avoids the situation where an issue is relegated to a particular session or weekend and separated from day-to-day work. For example, an isolated session on racism can build up high anxiety levels for both black and white participants and unleash a lot of anger during the session. Often people come away from such "anti-racist training" feeling that racism is a very difficult subject which, thank goodness, has been "done" now. Sessions on challenging oppression or raising awareness of attitudes need to be linked with integrating change into work practice or they will have little lasting effect. Not only will this approach give the opportunity to make significant developments with learning programmes but the forward plans give participants something concrete to do with their awareness of injustice.

Developing appropriate methods and materials

A participative learning programme will need attention in a variety of areas: in the recruitment and selection of a group which has a varied background and range of experience to provide the basis for sharing, in the support required for getting to know each other and in the monitoring necessary to keep track of developments. The following questions could be addressed by those involved in organising learning to help an analysis of a programme's participative approach. **Working Paper 28** contains a checklist for evaluating a programme.

1) How are we using participants' experience?

Check whether participants are involved in negotiating the content.

2) How is this experience being valued and their confidence being increased?

Look at how tutors are presenting themselves.

Check group work skills and methods in relation to this area.

Are participants encouraged to record their experience?

3) How are participants encouraged to share experience and gain support from each other?

Pay particular attention to how this is being carried out at the start of the programme.

Check the methods through which momentum continues in the discussion.

Make sure that participants can and do challenge each other and the tutors.

Check that those challenging receive the support of the tutors.

4) As certain groups are undervalued and oppressed on the grounds of race, gender, class and/or ability, a systematic approach to equal opportunities should be adopted. How do programme organisers ensure that participation by oppressed groups is not only possible, but positively encouraged?

Pay attention to recruitment and selection procedures. Publicity should reach potential applicants from a variety of backgrounds and experience and their experience should be valued in selection.

Provide adequate access and facilities for disabled people and sensible and sensitive child-care arrangements.

See **Chapter One:** ***Nuts and Bolts*** for practical suggestions on recruitment and selection of participants and arrangements for child-care and accessible facilities.

5) How does the content of the programme provide opportunities to share and develop work practice on equal opportunities issues and challenging oppression?

Include equal opportunities issues in planning sessions, learning materials, case studies and discussion.

Value and initiate responses and challenges to oppressive and discriminatory practice and attitudes.

Value contributions from those whose opinions have traditionally been undervalued, e.g. women, disabled people, working class people and black people. Give support to participants when they challenge other participants, tutors, and management structures.

Involve resource people from groups which actively campaign on these issues.

6) How will the programme be monitored and evaluated to assess effectiveness?

Build and maintain good systems of communication between participants, programme organisers and tutors.

Use criteria and methods of monitoring and evaluation which are based on an understanding of the issues and practice.

Respond appropriately to the information provided by monitoring and evaluation exercises.

Involve participants, tutors, programme organisers, resource people and anyone involved in the programme.

Include past, present and potential participants in programme organising committees so that their views can be fed in.

7) Building a participative learning programme means a lot of hard work and commitment to the basic principles of using and valuing experience and learning from each other. What qualities and experience will tutors and course organisers need?

Have recent experience in the field to keep them up to date with the issues involved in the work.

Be committed to the value of learning from experience and to applying a participative approach to all aspects of the programme.

Be committed to ensuring that issues of class, race, gender, ability and age are given a high profile in all aspects of the programme.

Have skills in building up the confidence of individuals and a group, and in sharing skills, knowledge and power with participants.

Be flexible in picking up and responding to "vibes" and improvising if a planned exercise is not going well.

Use imagination and creativity to keep participants' interest and tailor a programme to meet the needs of each group. Modifications to material or the way in which an exercise is organised may be necessary depending on the group and the setting.

Participative learning should positively promote "active learning" which engages participants' thinking and encourages them to share in the process and content of a learning programme. We hope that ***Learning From Each Other*** will help you to organise programmes which are structured to allow this to happen. Making a programme accountable to the participants and encouraging them to become involved in discussion about the development of the group will reap its own rewards. When participants take responsibility for their learning and apply it to their practice, the organisers can genuinely feel that they have been effective "agents of awareness".

Terms used in the book

The following list defines our understanding and use of terms and methods in participative learning programmes.

Action learning

Action learning provides a structure for learning in the field. Each participant is paired with another who visits her at her place of work. The pairs work together at mutually agreed times and agendas on the problems arising in daily work. The visitor acts as consultant on current work issues and "sounding board" for ideas about how to resolve problems.

Brainstorm

The term usually refers to an exercise where participants are encouraged to contribute ideas on a particular topic or issue without worrying about order or immediate application. The exercise is a good way to warm-up as participants can contribute randomly, quickly and are not singled out for speaking. As the method can often provoke a full and uninhibited exploration of a topic, it may also be particularly useful when a group has to make a difficult decision as the pros and cons of particular courses of action can be elicited and considered. The exercise should result in a number of ideas - some better than others.

In order for the information from a brainstorm to be useful, tutors may need to play a role either during or after the session in encouraging participants to organise and/or evaluate the ideas. Otherwise, what results is a haphazard list. The list could be reviewed, discussed or summed up during the session. Alternatively, the group could be encouraged to look at the ideas more closely after the initial brainstorm. For example, they could organise or prioritise the contributions by deciding which ideas are the most important or fall into a particular category. (See **Feedback** below.)

When writing up the notes from sessions, tutors should usually attempt to order the contributions by sorting them into different categories, eliminating repetition and making sure that obscure phrases are transformed to make written sense. The notes from sessions are often an opportunity to highlight important points which may not have been explored fully during the session. Participants can also be asked to make additions or comments to these notes to encourage further reflection and evaluation.

Flipchart

Topic for brainstorm

The flipchart symbol is often used to indicate when a brainstorm should take place. The words appearing on the symbol should be written up clearly so that participants can keep the subject of the discussion in focus.

Case Studies

A case study is the presentation of a situation for analysis: to determine what factors created the situation or possible ways to get out of it. Case studies aim:

- to share responses to familiar problems or issues. The exercise can be useful in developing good practice or to develop methods for tackling problems.
- to challenge participants to tackle a new or different situation. Case studies can be useful in encouraging awareness of issues, equal opportunities practice or other important areas of work which a group needs some "prodding" to tackle.
- to assess understanding and experience. The response to a case study can help analysis of an individual's or group's development.

Ideally, tutors would be clear before the session about the purpose of the exercise. But, predicting what will be difficult about a case study is not always easy or possible – be prepared to think on your feet to support participants who have no idea how to tackle the situation. If the case is accurate and relevant, a little struggling with the problem may not be such a bad idea. A good case study should reproduce the dilemmas and choices faced in real life. If participants are genuinely lacking in experience, going through the case study together can be a useful exercise.

Case studies can be difficult for participants if:

Blocks to confidence interfere with the ability or possibility of transferring their experience to the case study.

Their experience is inadequate to tackle the situation and they are not feeling confident enough to admit it in the group.

The situation is not easily transferable to their own experience.

The situation presented seems irrelevant or unrealistic.

The way the case study is written or presented makes the situation seem too complicated or insufficient in detail to understand.

Good practice when writing a case study:

Base the case study on a problem situation which has occurred in field work practice. Using situations from your own experience or participants' experience can be a good basis to start from.

Clearly state the problem with enough detail to make it "real".

Keep it short.

Make sure that you could come up with a response. (Try it out yourself.)

Add: *"What would you need to consider?"* at the end the case study – to emphasise the need to consider options. This also allows your response to requests for more details about the case to be: *"What difference would that make to your considerations?"*

Address equal opportunity issues.

Leave plenty of space for notes and make sure that there are enough pens and pencils.

Ensure representation of different perspectives in the case studies (e.g. from the point of view of activist, worker), to keep a practical edge.

The case studies in this book are based on common problems or issues faced in our own experience and/or by the community workers we have worked with – they may not be appropriate or relevant for every tutor or group. Case studies based on issues, problems or situations raised by the participants will have more immediate relevance. Get the group to pool ideas for case studies and keep your ears open for appropriate ideas arising from the experience of the group.

A number of examples of case studies and methods for them appear in **Exercise 4.6 *Case studies in group work*, Exercise 5.8 *Case studies in committee problems*.** See also **Feedback** below about methods of sharing the small group discussion of case studies with the larger group.

Co-counselling

An arrangement for working in pairs where each participant takes turns to act a a counsellor for the other. Discussion of work related problems can be beneficial when the participants come from similar situations and backgrounds *or* when an "outsider's" view provides clarification.

Discussions

Chairing discussions will involve balancing a number of dynamics. Participants should be able to relate the discussions to their own experience but should not be allowed to bore the rest of the group. Sharing experience means that participants require a number of skills, being able to: listen, contribute in both a supportive and a challenging way, and respond to others in the group. Some group members may have developed these skills to a greater degree than others. The difference between open attack and interesting challenge is not always easily detectable and sensitivities will vary. A desire for honesty may need to be countered with a desire to protect others' feelings.

Tutors will need to encourage useful and relevant examples and to avoid long-winded anecdotes, to encourage some participants to share their experience and discourage others! Ask yourself: Is this group supportive and healthy, or simply avoiding difficult problems? Discussing "Guidelines" for the group (see **Exercise 2.3 *Guidelines for the group*)** and using monitoring exercises (see **Chapter 6 *Keeping track of participative learning*)** to alert you to problems may help, but sometimes, participation may seem more like an aim than a reality and tutors may need to develop their own strategies to make progress.

Where discussion of issues are called for in the exercises, a list of **Issues to consider** or **Points to raise** will be included as suggestions. See **Elicit** below.

Elicit

"Elicit" means to call forth or bring out something hidden or unexpressed. The role of a tutor in a participative setting involves calling on and drawing out participants who have relevant experience and assisting people to put their experience into words. Tutors need to be aware that our educational system *has discouraged participation* and encouraged people to say only what the teachers want to hear. When facilitating the exercises, tutors need to both support and challenge participants – not to play a passive role.

Facilitator

A facilitator is someone who eases or promotes action or process. In a participative programme, this is an active role as can be seen in the above entry under **Discussions**, the **Introduction** and the entry below under **Tutor**.

The level of involvement of a facilitator in adult learning is, however, a constant source of debate. The term tends to be used when the worker is involved in an organising role: someone who arranges groups and settings and who chairs debates. In a participative programme, these activities require a knowledge of the participants to decide on groupings, to support and challenge as required and to monitor and evaluate the discussions. Some learning groups will function better with a facilitator who stands back from direct involvement and places more responsibility for the learning on the participants. A **tutor** could be seen alternatively as someone who contributes their knowledge, understanding, or experience to the discussion (see **Tutor** below).

Facilitators will need to consider participants' needs and the dynamics of a group as well as their own style of working when deciding on their level of intervention with a learning group – which will probably change as the group develops. Participants should also be encouraged to use the exercises themselves.

Feedback

Feeding back information or ideas from case studies (or any small group exercise) can be done in a variety of ways. To avoid the potential boredom of listening to several groups listing their ideas, try some different ways to share the discussion:

> Design a structure so that the feedback comes to a conclusion for the issues under consideration. For example, a "brainstormed" list of information could be fed back into a sequenced, "stages" approach, separate columns for an organised analysis, or lists of pros and cons.
>
> Don't always feed back each group's response in sequence, get bits from each.
>
> Ask participants to agree on one or two key points to feedback to the larger group.

Ask yourself (or the group) if the feedback is really necessary. Has the experience in the small groups been sufficient?

Have a discussion of the exercise instead: What did you learn from tackling this case study? or, What points will you take away and use in your work?

Guidelines or Ground Rules

Guidelines or ground rules about how a group will function are set by the group of participants to ensure agreement on key points – particularly those to do with possible points of friction – but also to ensure that expectations are reached. We prefer the word "guidelines", but the term "ground rules" seems to be in common usage. Ground rules usually cover issues such as: confidentiality, smoking, punctuality and levels of participation – a combination of practical and principled considerations. **Exercise 2.3** ***Guidelines for the group*** describes how guidelines could be set with the group. A key factor in setting ground rules is setting a date for review.

Learning Programme

This term is used in preference to training course simply because we feel that adult learners are involved in learning both inside and outside of sessions and before and after a course. When organising a programme, this learning should be taken into account.

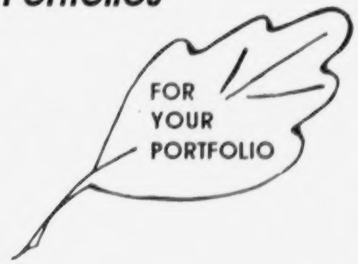
Network

In some circles, "network" or "networking" is jargon and has certain unpleasant business associations. However, the words accurately describe the working links which a community worker builds between individuals, groups and organisations. Working relationships and lines of communication are built between people who know what the others can offer in terms of support, resources and experience. We have sometimes used the phrase, "a snowballing effect," to describe how networks are built up. A few individuals are put into contact with each other – they each contact a few more – and the total network of people becomes larger.

Participant

Participant is used to describe the people who take part in a programme. The level of participation will vary with different groups and programmes. With some, participants may be simply contributing their own experience in a participative exercise. Other learning programmes will involve participants in the structure and direction of the programme. In either case, the key element is active learning which involves the learner's previous experience.

Portfolios



A Portfolio is a collection of evidence of experience and learning that has taken place – either inside or outside education or work. The material included is designed to demonstrate the skills, qualities, and knowledge that the person has acquired. The process of building a portfolio can include gathering together existing evidence, such as reports of work, publicity, photographs, and job descriptions, as well as the preparation of new material. The Portfolio can then be used for presentation in applications for jobs, entrance into academic institutions or assessment of learning. The material in the Portfolio will need to be selected and organised carefully according to which purpose the holder wishes to use it for.

Many of the exercises in this book can be useful in demonstrating learning from experience. In some cases, the process of preparation is sufficient - many people will not need or wish to present their Portfolios to anyone else. Participants can be encouraged to develop evidence without worrying what the final product will look like. Selection and organisation may well be the final phase of developing a portfolio - because building evidence of learning is an excellent way to encourage people to recognise and value their own learning. Whether they wish to use that evidence in presentation is almost another issue.

Hints for Portfolios to be used in presentation:

Include a table of contents.

Include a very brief (one or two lines) summary of strengths on the first page to put the contents into context, e.g. Mary has six years of community based work and a clear commitment to equal opportunity issues.

Include some form of c.v. (curriculum vitae) near the beginning to give an overview of the person's experience.

Each portfolio owner should develop her own structure for the information as be a positive statement of her experience. (For example, she should not include a section labelled "Further Education" unless she has had some!)

Clearly labelled each item with an explanation of why it has been included. For example, indicate what role the participant played in the development of a piece of work - or why the issue presented is significant or interesting.

Use a folder which will allow for easy removal and replacement of material so that it may be re-used on other occasions.

Resource person

A resource person is someone who is called upon to contribute their expertise, experience or approach to a session. Individuals or organisations may be asked to assist with preparation for a session or to participate, as appropriate. A resource person not only contributes relevant experience but will add to participants' networks. See **Working Paper 26** for a record sheet for information about resource people.

Tutor

The role of a tutor in a participative learning programme is active, requires a good understanding of the material and relevant experience. The resources that such a person has will assist the progress of a learning group as she will be able to put issues into context, contribute examples to indicate a way forward and share her facilitating and organising skills. The tutor is responsible for transferring responsibility for the group and the learning to the participants. The process of creating a participative group will require considerable understanding and skills. **Chapter Two: Getting to Know Each Other** details a number of strategies for increasing a group's confidence, developing their networks and sharing skills.

A tutor will need to present a model of a healthy group member: participating, listening to and respecting others' contributions, exploring situations and issues fully – particularly in relation to equal opportunities issues – and challenging assumptions (e.g. asking for definitions of jargon, questioning accepted policy statements, asking for clarification of general statements about practice). A tutor has to think carefully about her behaviour as a member of the group to assess whether she is supportive as well as challenging. Listening to a group and watching them carefully will assist informed judgments about their needs. **Chapter Six: Keeping Track of Participative Learning** contains a number of methods for assisting an analysis of a group. The criteria used will be based on the tutors' own practice and experience as well as those based on discussion with others involved.

(See also **Facilitator** above.)

CHAPTER ONE

NUTS AND BOLTS

The "nuts and bolts", or practical arrangements for a learning programme, can be crucial in ensuring that a group will be able to learn from each other and may require considerable planning and organisation to get right. This chapter explores a number of important issues to consider when planning and includes some useful checklists for making arrangements. Read this chapter before you make a budget!

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B. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS page 21

C. TUTORS' WORKING ARRANGEMENTS page 31

D. RESOURCES AND FACILITIES page 33

E. RESIDENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS page 37

A. SETTING UP A PROGRAMME

Identifying need

Carrying out some initial work on identifying need is essential for any proposed programme. Sometimes, this is straightforward: a specific learning need may be revealed through everyday work in a community, region or field of work. For example, contact with local workers may reveal a need for a learning programme to look at issues arising as a result of changes in the law or government policy. Increased activity in the community on an issue such as Play or youth work may bring to attention the need for those involved to share their experience. A particular group in the community may gain in confidence and see the benefits of meeting together to look at common issues affecting their lives, e.g. people with disabilities. A group member, tutor or agency can respond to these situations and set up an appropriate programme based on their needs. The aims and methods on the learning programme are then determined in consultation with the potential participants. As a result participants are more likely to contribute to the sessions and feel stimulated by learning something new.

How the consultation with potential participants is undertaken depends on the circumstances in which you are working. Let us take one example:

> *a worker or group of workers in a neighbourhood or area of work may wish to develop a learning programme for local activists, members of a specific group or for the wider community.*

In this situation, participants may be contacted in their day-to-day work to find out their views, assess their response to the idea and agree a date for an open meeting. Alternatively, a survey or letter may ask members of groups to respond if interested in a suggested programme. An invitation to an open meeting to share views about the intended programme would be included. This meeting would involve discussion of appropriate aims and content. This method of confirming the training need gives potential participants the opportunity to get involved in all stages of the programme.

A different method of consultation may be more appropriate with the following examples:

> *a community group (e.g. local management committee) may ask a tutor or facilitator to put on a learning programme.*
>
> *a team of workers may wish to look at a particular issue in their work practice.*
>
> *a manager may commission a tutor to organise sessions for her staff team.*

In this group of examples, the needs of the group appear to have been already identified. However, discussion of the proposed programmes with organisers and/or potential participants may reveal that there are differences between the needs of individual group members or between the course organisers' perception of needs and those of potential participants. Negotiation of content is one point at which to address the possibly conflicting demands of participants. During discussion and planning of the programme, you may wish to consider whether a participative programme is in fact appropriate with this group. If time is limited and specific learning objectives have been defined, the group may benefit from more directive input.

Identifying less specific learning needs over a wider geographical area can be revealed using surveys, monitoring practice, discussions, open meetings with potential participants and interested parties. Such methods may reveal that people are interested in learning a specific skill, gaining awareness or acquiring knowledge in a particular area. Examples of programmes set up as a result of such consultation include assertiveness training, challenging racism courses and information sessions on housing laws. The need to alleviate isolation, share experiences and gain recognition for experience was expressed in a survey of unqualified workers by the Greater Manchester Community Work Training Group. This led to the development of the Community Work Learning Programme.

Developing good practice in consultation with potential participants is a vital first step in identifying need which is often overlooked due to work pressure or complacency. For example, a busy practitioners may be under pressure from management to produce results as in the following case:

> *A community health worker had a work priority "to educate the community on healthy eating habits". She thought that an interesting course for pensioners on this issue was a speedy way to address this. The course was planned and set up but no one came. The worker felt disappointed and let down.*

A preliminary survey of pensioners carried out by talking with them in social clubs, luncheon clubs or other community settings may have revealed a lack of interest in the "Healthy Eating" course but have given the worker a chance to develop more productive work based on their needs. Starting from where people are at can avoid wasted energy and disappointment.

Another worker's complacency may lead to consultation being seen as superfluous. He may feel that he knows the community so well that he doesn't have to seek out their views before setting up a programme. He runs the risk of participants feeling unable to contribute and finding the content boring or irrelevant.

Guidelines on identifying learning needs

Use regular monitoring and evaluation of groups you are working with or involved with to identify needs for learning, training or support.

Use field work contacts to discuss whether they share your assessment.

When contacted by a group who have already identified their needs, check them out. Have decisions been collective? Has a worker, manager, or dominant group member identified the needs in the others' "best interests?"

Use surveys, open meetings and letters to reveal needs amongst people in a wide geographical area.

Getting together a programme committee

Once the need for a learning programme has been identified, a programme committee may take responsibility for overseeing the running and progress of a programme. We would encourage workers to form a steering group or training group to oversee the planning and running of learning programmes at an early stage so that skills are shared, learned, and evaluation takes place in as wide a setting as possible. Tutors will be encouraged to monitor and evaluate a programme as they go along, produce a final report, and look at lessons learned if they are reporting to a steering group rather than simply working on their own. Members of a wider group often pick up information and feelings on how the programme is going "on the ground" and can feed this back to the tutors.

Members of a programme committee should include people who have had direct experience of the needs being addressed. For some programmes, the committee will simply consist of the tutor (or tutors) and representation from participants – if not the whole group. Other committees may also require or benefit from representation from sponsors, employers, managers, trade unions, the relevant training agency or other training agencies, validating bodies, past and potential participants, and/or other representatives from the field. Any committee member should be clear about who they represent and early discussion of the principles underlying the programme will greatly help progress.

Involving participants in any group which oversees the running of a learning programme is important:

- to share skills, knowledge, and resources
- to improve participants' ability to set up similar programmes.
- to encourage participants to be involved in decisions about the programme.
- to increase their understanding of the aims and structure of the programme.
- to identify problems and discuss solutions.
- to ensure that the programme continues to meet real needs.

A variety of ways can be used to **organise participant representation**:

- publicising open meetings which all participants can attend.
- inviting participants to elect representatives to the group.
- notifying participants of each meeting in advance and asking for representatives.

Particular attention needs to be paid to the **way meetings are organised** to maximise the involvement of participants. We have written up some of the factors which we have found to help or hinder participation and invite you to make additions.

Factors affecting participant involvement on a learning programme committee

What can hinder?	What can help?
Use of jargon, initials, and mystifying language.	Induct and welcome new members. Make sure that the atmosphere allows for interruptions for clarification.
Boring items on the agenda which are time consuming.	Use sub-groups particularly for detailed work.
People with more time or power setting the agenda.	Have a convenor who is accessible. Publicise a date by which the members have to submit items for the agenda. Have the convenor telephone the members for any agenda items they wish to add.
Seating arrangements which are hierarchical or result in people being hidden.	Try seating in a simple circle and suggesting where people sit.
Participants' opinions not being valued.	Welcome participants. Introduce everyone. Respond to and note all contributions.
Inconvenient timing of meetings.	Agree a suitable time for meeting with participants. Rotate time of meetings if a common time cannot be agreed. Offer childcare payments.
Out of date or incomplete mailing lists.	Add your suggestions . . .

The **functions and responsibilities** of the committee could include some or all of the following:

- to set and maintain the aims and objectives for the programme.
- to appoint, manage and support the programme tutors
- to recruit, select, and support the participants.
- to authorise the budget and expenditure.
- to oversee the content and process.
- to campaign for resources.
- to provide an open forum where members of the committee and the current participants can raise any issues of concern.
- to monitor progress and evaluate the programme.
- to secure adequate funding, recognition and support for the programme.

Setting the content of a learning programme

Working out an appropriate learning programme with a group means balancing the needs of participants, tutors, programme providers, funders, employers, and not least, the community. Some of the issues to be considered include:

What do the participants say they want the programme to be about?

Ask participants what they feel should be included in the programme during selection interviews or the first session and encourage contributions of ideas throughout the programme.

When working with an existing group, think about meeting with them individually BEFORE the programme begins as negotiating the aims and content of the programme may reveal differences in expectations.

*Make a contract with the whole group about what the learning will involve to help clarification. Using an exercise to set guidelines for the group (**Exercise 2.3**), may assist this process.*

What has the publicity about the programme offered?

Information about the programme will have encouraged some self-selection of participants who will expect certain issues to be covered.

Have employers or sponsors set an agenda for the programme? How specific is the remit?

Tutors and groups may need to address aims set by other bodies and negotiate content accordingly. They may also have to explain how the content relates to certain "competencies" defined by the sponsors.

What do participants in the group feel that the others need to cover?

A participative group should be challenging as well as supportive. For example, participants with disabilities may well recognise limitations in awareness or understanding on the part of able-bodied participants which will need to be addressed.

What are the tutors' interests and/or views?

Tutors will have experience and ideas about how a programme can meet the overall aims. They should be clear about why certain issues should be covered and be willing to negotiate that with participants.

For example, tutors will feel that monitoring and evaluation of work, as a key area of community work practice, should be covered. They should be prepared to argue why, if necessary, with reference to their own overview of work and community development principles.

Assessing the needs of learners in a participative setting should involve this variety of perspectives. Tutors will be required to give considerable time and thought to planning a programme which will provide an opportunity for all participants to participate openly, freely and confidently.

See **Chapter Six:** ***Keeping Track of Participative Learning*** for further ideas on how to find out about participants' views, hopes and fears.

B. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Unless a programme is designed for a clearly defined and existing group of people (e.g. "problem-solving" within a group, or, working with members of an elected committee on management responsibilities) a two-way recruitment and selection procedure is important for any short or long programme which aims to be participative. Good practice in recruitment and selection will mean that:

- applicants can obtain information about a programme and what is expected which will allow them to decide whether they feel ready, able and willing to participate.
- programme organisers can obtain information about applicants which will allow them to select a group who can learn from each other through sharing experience and supporting and challenging each other.

Programme organisers will target individuals who are ready to learn from each other: who will benefit from and contribute to the group. For example:

- *a short programme on* ***Working with Community Groups on Health Issues*** *may want to target a variety of health workers who are interested in a community work approach as well as members of or workers with community groups who have experience of health issues.*
- *a long-term programme for experienced community workers on* ***Taking Skills Further*** *would need to ensure that participants have a range and depth of experience, are committed to work for the duration of the programme and understand what the programme is aiming to achieve.*

Organisers will ensure that people who have not had previous opportunities are reached. Attention to procedures can mean that the participants on a programme are those for whom the learning is designed - not just an elite group, a clique with "insider" knowledge or a "cosy group" who would not challenge the tutor.

The procedures used can be clearly linked to principles of participative learning and the aims of the particular learning programme. For example, an aim for a learning programme may be: *to provide learning opportunities people with disabilities.*

To work towards this aim, programme organisers will need to look at their recruitment and selection procedures to see whether they do in fact reach out and encourage people with disabilities or whether barriers are being set up. Building awareness and developing practice on equal opportunities can be helped by asking questions at each stage of the process, such as:

- Are the targeted applicants aware of the programme?
- Do they know that their applications will be welcomed?
- Is adequate support being provided? *(e.g. practical requirements and personal support through the involvement of people who have had similar experiences in recruitment, selection and the programme itself.)*
- Are the skills and experience of disabled people being recognised? *(e.g. challenging discrimination, work in particular areas, unpaid work, caring skills.)*
- Is communication and publicity successful? Are disabled people coming forward?
- Are the needs of disabled people being met by programme?

Similar monitoring exercises will need to be undertaken using the other aims of a learning programme - particularly those referring to equal opportunities. If the publicity, interviewing procedures and selection criteria are methodically examined through questions like these, blocks to participation can be discovered and dealt with. Choices are not always possible. Money may be tight; venues are not always adequate; contacts may not be sufficient. Programme organisers may often face difficult decisions about whether to run a programme which does not meet the aims.

Unhappy compromises may seem to be the only "solution." With any luck, we will learn from our mistakes. Careful budgeting, planning ahead, and the involvement of potential participants in organising the programme can help suitable arrangements to be made and campaigning for change to be carried forward.

Recruitment of participants

In order to uphold the principles of participative learning during the recruitment of participants, programme organisers should aim to ensure that:

- publicity and information about the programme is clear and distributed as widely as possible through a variety of networks. Attention will need to be paid to recruit people from a variety of backgrounds and circumstances and some groups may need to be particularly targeted.
- applicants are aware of what experience is relevant, how to present it when they apply, and what criteria is being used in selection.
- applicants know what the programme expects from them, e.g. commitment, participation, sharing of good and bad experience.
- applicants are aware of the principles underlying the programme and the methods used to achieve them. For example, they may need to be made aware that they are expected to reflect on their experience in order to get the most out of their learning.

The recruitment process

1. Leaflets and information

Any printed material about the programme should be written in easily understood language, answer as many questions about the content and practical arrangements as possible without becoming too long and include a contact number and address for further information. An invitation to an information and/or Open Day – or to make some other personal contact is also desirable. Consideration should be given to whether translations would help potential applicants.

Points to include in publicity:

- Childcare information.
- Information about access to the venue and facilities which would be useful to people with disabilities.
- Costs and funding arrangements.
- What participants will get from the programme. *(such as personal and career development, support and information networks, certification or other evidence of learning, e.g. portfolios). The information could be presented as a "cost/benefit" analysis so that participants can understand how much time and work they will have to contribute in order to receive the support, new skills or learning, certification, network,*

etc. offered by the programme. "If I give up so many hours and weekends, what will I get in return?"

- Methods and principles: why a participative approach is being used and what it means.
- Samples of content.
- Profiles of participants, or clear examples of who the programme is being aimed at.
- The minimum criteria for selection.
- When and where the sessions are being held.
- The background and experience of the tutors.

A major difficulty with designing good publicity is attempting to balance a variety of aims:

- to include as much information as possible.
- to make the leaflet easily understood, attractive and easily accessible.
- to maintain an image of high standards with employers and validating bodies.
- to produce publicity at the last minute after funding arrangements have finally been secured!

One solution is to provide a variety of leaflets aimed at different audiences. A general information leaflet can include a tear off section, enclosure and/or telephone number for further details. You may need to ensure that other forms of publicity, e.g. news items, articles, visits to employers or centres, are also used to promote the desired image.

2. Distribution

Publicity and information about the programme should be distributed as widely as possible using networks of people as well as mailing lists and newsletters:

Pay particular attention to contacts working in working-class, black or different cultural communities or with groups of disabled people or women to encourage applicants from these groups.

Encourage contacts to forward names of potential applicants and to bring them to visit the tutors or to an Information Day.

Bear in mind that previous participants and their employers have an important role to play in spreading the word about a programme.

Make sure that other training courses have the information.

Other venues for distribution may be appropriate for particular programmes, e.g.:

Programmes for community development workers may be advertised in Council bulletins.

Programmes for activists may use local radio.

Paid workers could be contacted through the relevant trade union branches.

If targeted groups have not applied by the closing date (e.g. there is under-representation from women, different cultural groups, disabled people), further contact can be made with the appropriate networks and the closing date could be extended for this group of people. Contact with relevant networks should be made as directly as possible.

3. Personal contact

Personal contact can be important and you may like to provide a variety of ways to meet potential applicants and their employers to discuss the programme. If the programme is very short, an Information Day may be too ambitious – but applicants can talk with someone about the programme through:

- a "stall" set up at another event (the AGM of a non-statutory organisation, a market place, a community centre, a community education "Careers Day", etc.).
- meetings or telephone contact with the tutors, programme committee members and/or programme organisers – you could offer this option in publicity.
- specific "outreach" visits to union meetings, community groups, other training courses.

Ideally, for any longer term programme, an **Information Day** could be held for potential participants and their employers. The session provides the opportunity to meet previous or current participants, tutors and programme committee members in a comfortable setting to discuss any questions about the programme. Potential applicants should be able to decide whether they feel ready for the programme by looking at the aims of the programme and the criteria for selection. Provide advice on filling in the application form and be sure to emphasise the most important questions (those which will be used to shortlist for interviews).

If the programme is currently running, the event may also be used as an Open Day to allow current participants to show off their work to their employers. The event can be very alive and enthusiastic and involve the employers in discussion of the benefits. The aims of the day should be clear in publicity and planning. Applicants should be aware that the event is not part of the selection process.

Combining the functions of the day can create a lot of work. Organisers may find themselves encouraging current participants to display their work to the best advantage. Potential applicants may then need reassurance that they will find the programme within their capabilities. The event may need space for private as well as public discussions.

Selection of participants

If programme organisers aim to use the principles of participative learning during the selection of participants, they will need to ensure that:

- the criteria are discussed with a wide group including potential participants and, if applicable, past participants.
- the criteria used are based *only on relevant* skills, qualities, or experience .
- the selection methods (i.e. application forms, interview arrangements, settings and questions) do not discriminate or discourage participation from appropriate applicants and that they positively encourage participation from people who are traditionally under-represented in training courses.
- the final list of participants makes up a group who can learn from each other. Some of the issues to consider would include ensuring that the group includes:

    individuals who have relevant experience, have some experience of sharing it and are ready to learn from others.

    a variety of cultural backgrounds and varied experience, e.g. women, black people, working class people, disabled people.

    support for individuals from others with similar backgrounds or experiences.

    individuals who will challenge other members of the group as well as those who will support each other. Perhaps those with strong personalities and a record of breaking new ground would be balanced with others who have been involved in a supportive or nurturing style of work.

    Different experiences to ensure a wide discussion may be appropriate for some programmes:

    a range of work experience, for example, people who have worked in different types of groups, i.e. groups with a variety of users, structures, settings, and characteristics.

    people who have had different working roles, e.g. the experience of being members, activists, paid and unpaid workers and officers.

    experience of different local authorities or employing agencies.

Examples of criteria and questions which can be used in selection of participants for a long-term programme for experienced community workers are included as **Working Papers**. Adapting these for use with shorter or different programmes should be a simple task.

1. Setting criteria for selection

The process of selection begins with discussion and agreement on the criteria to be used and then deciding who will be involved in the shortlisting, interviewing and selection of participants. The type of programme being designed will determine who will be involved in the discussion:

> If the tutors are the neighbourhood community workers setting up a programme for local activists, they could be responsible for consultation with the community as part of their normal work.
>
> If the programme has a wider brief, a committee to set the criteria could be made up of people who are past and current participants, sponsors (possibly the managers), other trainers, current practitioners from the field and the tutors.

Whatever arrangements are made to set the criteria, representation from the "consumers" is necessary. This initial discussion of the criteria will determine the design of the application form, the criteria for shortlisting and the questions to be asked at the interviews.

2. A selection committee

The consultation group which determines the overall criteria should also decide who should be on a selection committee. The selection committee is responsible for making all the arrangements for the selection, carrying out the procedure and making decisions about shortlisting criteria (who should be interviewed) and the final selection.

Anyone involved in interviewing should be briefed on the criteria used, the interviewing methods and be provided with training if necessary.

Anyone who will take part in the final selection should have been involved throughout: from deciding the criteria for shortlisting to being involved in the interviewing.

In other words, drafting people onto the selection committee during the process is not recommended because they will miss out on the discussion which has determined the decisions made. Be careful to ensure participation from enough available people when determining a selection committee.

3. The application form

The application form should take into account what information is necessary to establish the experience required for participation. Ensure that questions are simply worded, directly related to the information required for the selection criteria and contain an explanation or example of what is required.

Direct applicants' attention to the most crucial questions which will be used to shortlist for interviews.

4. Shortlisting

Try to ensure that applicants know the selection criteria for interview. In most cases, applicants should be interviewed if they have any appearance of possibly fulfilling the basic criteria from their written forms. If responses are unclear because of poor writing skills or the committee is unsure about an applicant, then interview her. Exceptions would only be made if the numbers of people being interviewed were genuinely excessive.

Judging the quality and depth of experience from written material can be difficult. Unless your programme requires participants to have a high level of literacy, wait for the interview to assess analytical skills.

5. Letters to applicants

In **Letters to those being interviewed** include not only the date and time of interview, but a map, access details, and general information about what will happen at the interview (e.g. 15 minutes welcome from previous participants and a half an hour interview with two people from the programme committee).

Letters to unsuccessful applicants are difficult. Make reference to the criteria used for selection and provide information about other training opportunities or ways forward.

Include: a contact number for the local Regional Community Work Training Group (**See Appendix E *Useful contacts***), the local Council for Voluntary Services, and/or Educational Guidance Service or Careers' Office numbers.

Unsuccessful applicants will be disappointed and if their experience of continuing or higher education is limited or non-existent, the rejection can knock people back. An opportunity to discuss the reasons may help. Make sure that you are clear why people have not been offered an interview.

6. Arrangements for interviews

Arrange dates and times of interview which allow time for applicants to be welcomed by people involved in the programme and put at their ease before the interview starts. The "welcome" can be another opportunity for past participants to inform potential ones about the programme. Ask applicants to come 15 minutes before the formal interview for a chat, opportunity to look through any publicity, and have a drink of tea/coffee before their interview begins.

Display any materials from the programme, make sure that there are refreshments, child entertainments, and ashtrays available and that the room is well ventilated.

Anyone involved in welcoming applicants will need a list of who is expected and at what time. At the correct time, they will take the applicants to the appropriate interviewing room.

When **planning the interview questions,** relate the questions to the criteria being used and ask "open" questions to allow people to offer a range of answers. Ask for specific examples from their experience. Summarise their answers before moving on to the next question to give an opportunity for corrections or additional information.

(NB. Open questions are those which can not usually be answered simply "yes" or "no". Try starting your questions with "Tell us about ...." or "How do you ....?")

For a sample set of questions and record sheets to make notes, see **Working Paper 5**.

7. Information Sheet

Give an **Information sheet** to each applicant who comes to the interview with details about the cost of programme, possible sources of funding and subsidies available; starting date; weekend dates, creche details and venues or child care arrangements; access details for all programme venues; dates when they should hear about places on the programme; and a contact number should they have any questions.

An Information Sheet to be taken away from the interview is important for several reasons: everyone will have been given the necessary information and the applicants will have a written reminder. The contact number will mean that they can get in touch if they have any further questions.

8. The Interview

The interviews are an opportunity to find out about the applicants in order to select according to the criteria. Tell applicants the criteria being used and what constitutes relevant experience.

The interviews are also an opportunity for the applicants to find out any further information they require about the programme so that they are aware of what participation involves.

The following points should be borne in mind when arranging the interviews:

Two people should interview each applicant together. Ideally one of the interviewers would be one of the tutors, the other would be any other member of the programme committee.

Ensure that each interviewer uses a set of papers for each person being interviewed to keep a record of responses. See **Working Paper 5** for an example.

Allow around half an hour for each interview but keep in mind that some people may require extra time due to difficulties in speaking.

Make sure that the seating arrangements are comfortable and non-hierarchical.

Use the same introductions for each applicant (see **Working Paper 3**) and divide up the tasks evenly between the interviewers. Work out beforehand .pa whether you will ask the questions alternately or alternate between asking questions and summarising.

9. The interview summary

After each interview, the interval can be used to finish any notes on the previous interview, read through the application of the next one, find a toilet and get a drink of coffee. (In other words the 15 minutes are vital, stick to the schedule of half an hour per interview.) The two interviewers consult to fill in a summary of the information about the applicant to make sure that their memory of the interview is accurate. No decision about whether an applicant should be given a place should be made at this stage and only relevant facts based on the criteria should be recorded. See **Working Paper 6** for an example of a record sheet.

10. Final selection

Arrange to meet for final selection on a different day to one on which interviews were held. The summary of each applicant's experience should allow the identification of those who have met all the criteria to be made. The difficulty comes if a number of people meet the criteria and a fewer number of places are available.

With a surplus of suitable applicants, final selection will be based on creating a group which can learn from each other using agreed criteria. Some of the issues to consider are listed at the beginning of this section and **Working Paper 1** includes an example of criteria which could be used.

11. Letters to applicants

The final list of participants should include several people on a reserve list in case any one has to drop out before the programme begins. In letters to successful applicants, outline the reasons for acceptance on to the programme and remind them of particular commitments (e.g. compulsory weekend, mandatory first session). Remember to ask them to confirm acceptance by a set date.

Make a reserve list of people who fit the criteria but were not able to get on because of numbers. Give them an idea about when they might hear about a place, for example, soon after the first list has confirmed acceptance.

Provide unsuccessful applicants with information about other training possibilities and information about the criteria and final selection process. See the previous entry about rejection letters under **4. Shortlisting for interview**. If places have been over-subscribed – explain the difficulties in the procedure and remind applicants that it was their experience which didn't fit the group – not them personally.

In striving for equal opportunities, attention to detail in recruitment and selection procedures is well worthwhile. If a group has not been specifically selected as a learning group, the varying personalities, roles and experience of members may not make it an ideal situation for learning. The group may not be representative of different views and experience and a history of relationships may make "gelling" difficult. If you are involved in work with an existing group or team, their balance, make-up, internal dynamics and hierarchies will need to be taken into consideration when designing the programme.

C. TUTORS

Some discussion of the role of tutors and facilitators appears under those headings in the Introduction. This section will address some of the practical issues of criteria for selection and working arrangements for tutors. We feel that participative learning requires the use of tutors with field work experience as well as an understanding of how to organise learning programmes.

Tutors' responsibilities will vary with different programmes, depending on the role, composition, and enthusiasm of the programme committee. But, the tutors have the responsibility of ensuring that the sessions run according to the principles agreed by the programme organisers. The guidelines available may be strict or lax, helpful or confused, but the tutors are the people on the front line who need to make them work. Usually, the tutors are given quite a lot of freedom in how they plan the programme and organise the sessions. However, in a participative programme, they would be required to monitor and evaluate regularly and feedback their findings to the programme organisers and/or the group itself to ensure accountability.

The criteria used to select an appropriate tutor will vary according to the experience required by the learning group or organisers. But generally, the requirements of a tutor on a participative learning programme will include:

- a belief in the importance of positive action in working for equal opportunities in the way a learning programme is organised and run.
- an understanding of the key issues involved in the work being covered.
- an awareness of the importance and role of previous experience and learning in adult learning.
- an ability to use a variety of techniques to encourage participation in a learning group.
- an ability to produce learning materials for varying abilities.
- an ability to keep records in an organised and open system.
- an ability to communicate with a wide variety of people with a warm and professional manner.
- an ability to pitch learning material at a variety of levels.
- an ability to challenge views and opinions and to stimulate responses to the learning material.
- an understanding of what may help or hinder others' ability to learn.

Tutors who are co-working have distinct advantages over one tutor. Their range of experience, ideas, and techniques is obviously increased, but so are the available approaches or responses to the group during the sessions. For example, one tutor can play a challenging role, while the other contrasts with a facilitating one. A tutor challenging reticent participants would know that if the participants felt pushed too far, they could ally themselves with the other tutor. Neither tutor would need to remain in a particular role, although one may naturally have a better response with particular individuals within the group due to personality or approach, shared experience, background or humour.

This approach to co-working requires a great deal of trust and communication between the tutors. Discussing the following issues - and adapting the arrangements to suit their own situations may help. Relaxing of the "rules" will occur as co-workers settle in, but in the early days, this plan is recommended:

> Meet together to plan sessions and discuss progress for *at least* one extra session a week, preferably at the same time each week.
>
> When planning include detailed allocation of tasks in running the sessions. (Who will introduce each exercise, etc.)
>
> Both tutors attend all sessions.
>
> Divide responsibility for running the sessions equally.
>
> Both tutors meet with all the participants in varying groupings, rather than having fixed "tutor groups."
>
> Keep to schedule. If time runs short while in a separate group, ensure that the other tutor knows before the end of the time allocated. This is particularly true when groups are to rejoin in the room where one of the groups is meeting.
>
> Plan for time together directly after the session to discuss problems or issues which arise.

See **Chapter Six:** ***Keeping Track of Participative Learning*** for a number of exercises which tutors can use to evaluate their role with the group. But to summarise, communication between co-working tutors must rate as one of the best ways to keep track!

D. RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

When making arrangements for the facilities for a learning programme, the needs of potential participants, resource people and tutors must be taken into consideration. Any decisions should be made after considering: Who will this exlude?

Time

The time needed to make a programme work will vary considerably depending on the experience of the tutors and organisers, their drive for perfection and practical considerations. As a very rough guide, a session run by experienced tutors will need an equivalent amount of time for each of the following: planning (deciding what to do), preparation (getting the materials organised), administration (an averaging out of time needed for book-keeping, library maintenance, letter writing, room-booking, grants applications, etc.), typing and individual sessions (participants will want time to chat - this does not include more formal supervision or tutorial time). In other words, for a one hour session, you will need at least 5 hours of other work in addition to meetings and recruitment and selection procedures. With any luck, some of the work will be done by different people.

Support network

In addition to the core tutors and organisers of the programme do you have a network of other resource people who can be drawn upon? This may be particularly important in ensuring that the programme is using a breadth of experience. See **Working Paper 26** for a record sheet.

Administrative and secretarial backup

Can you afford either? Can you not afford them? The responsibility for organising the papers, typing up the notes from sessions, answering queries, taking messages, photocopying worksheets, writing letters to participants must be allocated in some way. Do not under-estimate the work involved!

Library

A library is useful. See **Appendix F** for a list of some useful books.

Funding

Organisers will need to use all their skills for finding adequate funds for a learning programme. Running a programme on a shoe-string is no fun. Bursaries will also be required for some participants. Consult as many people as possible about potential sources of funding.

Rooms

Meeting rooms need to be comfortable, have enough room for the group not to feel cramped and be accessible to wheelchairs. Varying arrangements for meeting will add interest, so rooms with enough space for flexibility are preferable.

The minimum arrangement for comfort is one large room and one smaller one. You will need at least one room which is large enough for everyone to sit comfortably (with enough space for the flipchart!) and preferably other comfortable rooms to move into for smaller group work. Although one very large room may work, you will almost undoubtedly find the noise levels a problem when several groups are talking at once. The use of one large room can also present difficulties when arranging two tutors groups as the noise and presence of the second group affects concentration and inhibits participation.

Space to spread out for pair work will be necessary at times. So ask yourself "Can people sit outside, go into other rooms and move around freely?"

Accessibility is important and needs to be advertised so that all potential participants feel welcome. Think about public transport and parking as well as accessibility for people with disabilities. Ask yourself "Who are we excluding through the choice of venue?" Information about provision required for rooms to be considered accessible is included in **Working Paper 7.**

Smoking

Are there any "house rules" about smoking? Are they reasonable? Is there adequate ventilation? Many people find it difficult to be assertive on this issue. Arrangements to limit smoking need to be agreed and maintained.

Telephone

Participants will need to be able to telephone apologies and messages. Ideally, a telephone would be in the building with someone else answering it in another room!

Photocopying

A photocopier in the building is useful for last minute copies and to copy material brought in by participants or produced during a session.

Refreshments

Tea and coffee in profusion are essential to adult education. If none are available nearby, then bring a kettle and get everyone to bring a cup and a contribution to supplies. An urn is ideal. Check on washing-up facilities and organise a rota early on in the programme.

Flipcharts

The advantage of flipcharts over black or white boards is primarily that the material can be easily saved in order to write up the notes from sessions or display. Some tutors may find that Overhead Projectors (OHPs) can serve the same purpose – although for the display of more than one sheet, flipchart paper is more useful. Don't forget to consider the needs of people with poor sight. Can the displays be put in an accessible situation?

Office

Will you have an office or storage space in the building? A room for the tutors to withdraw to is very useful. Space for storing supplies, including books, materials, records, refreshments, etc., makes life easier. A filing system on the programme understood by tutors and secretarial staff involved is important.

Toilets

Are they nearby and accessible for wheelchairs?

Childcare and creche provision

In order to increase involvement in learning programmes by women who are traditionally under-represented in higher education, the childcare needs of prospective participants must be addressed. In practice, this means working out the needs, deciding on the provision which will be on offer, making sure that finance is available and publicising the arrangements for childcare in recruitment information. When setting up a learning programme, two areas of childcare need to be considered: provision for children under five and childcare for children of school age.

Childcare for Under-Fives

Arrangements for child-care for under-fives can include using an already existing facility, setting up your own creche or providing payment for childcare.

1. Using an already existing facility

Find out where the local childcare provision exists, for example in a further education centre, adult education centre, community or women's centre. Provision of creche facilities on or near the site will increase opportunities, for women in particular, to take up courses. Situating a learning programme near to a well run creche would be ideal as parents' independence would be increased and barriers to attendance removed. Parents could bring young children with them without undue extra arrangements and would know that they were being well looked after.

Use your knowledge of the Council nursery and school provision. This may help to arrange a sessional place in a nursery to facilitate a parent's attendance. A letter from a tutor may be all that is needed to allow a head teacher to admit a pre-school child to a nursery class earlier than the normal waiting list would allow.

2. Setting up your own creche

If you are in a building without childcare facilities nearby, organising a creche on the premises may be possible. But, to work well, the creche will require careful planning and responsible people to organise the arrangements. Unless parents feel that their children are safe and happy in the creche, they will not be able to carry on in the learning programme.

A creche will need to conform to regulations governing health and safety for Under-Fives and be registered with the Social Services. Contact the local Social Services Department for the regulations. Arrangements will also have to be made for Fire and Environmental Health Officers to inspect and advise you on setting up provision and obtaining registration. A very useful publication on setting up a creche is obtainable from the Salford Women's Centre, telephone 061 736 3844.

3. Provision of payment to cover costs

An alternative to providing childcare can be supplying payment to cover expenses for arrangements made by the parents. If you do not have the budget or facilities to provide a creche and do not have a substantial number of children under five requiring creche facilities, the arrangement can work well.

The system means that parents claim a weekly amount to cover the cost of child-minders which they arrange themselves. The benefits to parents are that they do not have to transport their children to a central location, arrangements can be made nearer to or in their homes (which may make playschool or nursery pickups easier) and that they can arrange a "minder" of their own choice - possibly someone the child(ren) already know.

The arrangement can cause havoc with a budget. Unless you know how many people will require the facility, the amount required is difficult to predict. Programme organisers will have to set a standard fee payable and keep track of how much is spent.

Provision for children of school age

Participants with children may not only have Under-Fives to take care of, but older children of school age which can affect opportunities for parents. To remove possible blocks, consider the following points:

Sessions can be arranged during school hours (e.g. starting no earlier than 9.30 and ending between 2.30 and 3 p.m.).

Dates for sessions can correspond to school terms (watch out for different local authorities having different holidays).

Parents could be paid child-minding fees to cover dates when the schools are on holiday (particularly useful if one or two have different holidays or "occasional" days).

Childcare should be provided on residentials for those who are not able to make alternative arrangements (NB. residentials during the week may be impossible - and watch out for school holidays when booking weekends!).

A small store of toys, crayons, paper and felt-tips can be available for children who attend sessions when recovering from an illness or because their school is on a day's holiday.

Mondays can be a problem because of the number of Bank Holidays (with schools being closed).

Sessions taking place in the evenings and at weekends should only be arranged at the request of participants.

Make sure that childcare provision is highlighted at all stages of the recruitment for the programme and that you are not paying lip-service to an important area of equal opportunity. Be flexible about childcare arrangements and sensitive to the difficulties in the way of parents' opportunities. Be aware, especially at the start of a programme, that leaving a child in a creche or with a child-minder can be difficult and confusing for a participant who has always looked after that child, or taken her with her to meetings or previous training. A few moments spent talking through the arrangements with participants may help adjustments on all sides.

E. RESIDENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Spending time on practical arrangements for a residential will help a programme to work well. If people are comfortable and feel well looked after, they will participate much more freely. Worry about the children, feeling cold, or not being able to eat the food will provoke grumbling rather than positive contributions. Consideration of the following points will help.

Working Paper 8 is a checklist to record information about different venues.

Prior arrangements:

Visit the venue before the weekend and check out the rooms, meeting facilities, childcare, food and amenities. Keep an up to date checklist for venues you are likely to use.

Circulate a questionnaire (**Working Papers 10**) to all participants in plenty of time before the residential asking about dietary, room and childcare requirements. (You may want to ask about smoking if you are arranging room allocations.) If the venue does have any limitations (e.g. about ages of children or food) let everyone know beforehand.

Circulate information to the participants about the weekend beforehand: the name, address and telephone number of the venue, directions on how to get there, room allocations, any items which need to be brought with them, date, time and point of departure and return, and possibly, an outline of the schedule.

Send a programme, list of people and bedroom allocations, any special requirements, and number and ages of children to the venue before you arrive. If some people arrive early, they can book in to the right room. Meal times and coffee breaks will also be "on record." Be specific about when and where coffee/tea should be served, if applicable.

Points to consider when making arrangements:

Bedrooms

Are the rooms warm and comfortable? Will people feel relaxed and "at home" or will they feel like they're being spoiled with luxury? (Both can be positive experiences.)

Flexibility in arrangements is useful – if beds can be moved between rooms, changes to allow children to sleep with parents can be accommodated. Are there extra beds and cots to cope with last minute people?

Will children sleep with their parents – or will extra rooms be required? Families may need adjoining bedrooms.

Allocate rooms to participants before arrival; confusion may be reduced. "Mixing" people can also be arranged in this way. Put smokers together. A bedroom plan with numbers will help you to make these arrangements.

Will all people with children be roomed next to each other to reduce disturbance for the others? Should you room the creche workers nearby to help baby-sitting arrangements?

Put people with the smaller children in the rooms with sinks or en suite bathrooms, if available. If using a large hotel or conference centre, give them the bedrooms nearer the meeting rooms. Is there a baby alarm system?

Check that there are baths as well as showers – for small children.

Meeting facilities on a residential

See the previous section, **D: Facilities**, which covers the issues to consider when looking at meeting rooms for a residential. Additional issues are:

Meeting other groups can be interesting, but a residential which aims to get a group to gel can find "outsiders" intrusive. If you have to share with others, will they be sympathetic to and clear about your needs? (Ensure clarification about who has calls on what space.)

Plenty of paper is essential. Will they definitely have enough flip-charts, paper and pens? Bring your own unless you are absolutely sure.

Make sure that you can display flip-charts and/or use Blu-tack. Screens may help.

Specifically timed coffee breaks can be disruptive if you want to be flexible in your sessions. However, they can provide a welcome change of pace. Do you want tea and coffee on call or to order it at specific times? An urn on constant call is usually preferable and a supply of biscuits or fruit to renew energy.

Amenities

Local amenities for adults (within easy reach: pubs, nice walks, shops, chip shop)? Scheduled free time can be a drag if there is nothing to do. People need to be able to relax and preferably get out for a bit. They may also need to buy presents for people at home.

Facilities for children (parks, museums, swimming baths)? Creche workers may want to take the children out.

Space for evening relaxation? If evening entertainment is "on-site" you won't have to worry about arranging baby-sitters. How far are the lounges/bar from the bedrooms?

Will you need to arrange baby-sitting for the evening? Ask the creche workers or find volunteers from the group.

If there is a bar, make sure that there is also a room without a bar for those who don't drink and that people do not feel isolated if they do not participate in whatever evening activity goes on.

Is there a television and video? Do you want to bring tapes? Don't bring anything too "heavy" for evening viewing or people will get worn out.

Childcare on a residential

If children are coming on a residential, the weekend will go much more smoothly if they are adequately taken care of. If they are not happy and well supervised, they could spoil the residential for the parents *and* everyone else. *Make sure* that they will be welcomed. Experience of children and facilities (high-chairs and cots) will be good signs (even if you don't need them.) A good test of whether children are welcome is to bring several with you when you visit! Look out for:

Space for the children to play: make sure that the room they will use is not too close to your meeting room and that it is reasonably child-proof.

Outdoor space: Is it safe and interesting?

A television for day and/or evening viewing may be necessary. (What if it rains?) Will there be adults interfering with their choice of programmes?

Some venues have their own creches and/or workers. Make sure that these are checked out. Will they be available in the evening? What breaks will they need? What extra charges will be necessary (bus fares for trips out, "spends" for kids, etc. - let parents know).

Ask about the creche workers: have they got experience of the ages - and the range of ages of the children you are bringing? Give them a list of the names and ages of any children who may possibly attend. Low numbers do not necessarily make the work easier. Three children aged three months, four years and nine years may require two workers.

Insurance and safety: Check with the local social services department about insurance requirements, recommended worker/children ratios and rates of pay. Their guidelines on day care should have information about Fire Regulations and Health and Safety laws.

If you are arranging the childcare, make sure that the toys/entertainments you bring are appropriate for the ages of the children. Videos are a good idea and board games for older children. Think of quiet, clean and portable entertainments. Will you supply your own drinks and biscuits for the children - or is squash, etc. easily available at any time? (any extra charge?)

If you offer unlimited child provision, you may find yourselves inundated and the budget for childcare over-committed. If you do provide good childcare, everyone will want to bring their children. Emphasise that the childcare is for those people who cannot make any other arrangements.

Parents should not feel that the children will be a burden, but everyone should be clear about the limits of the provision - and ultimately that they are responsible for their children. Make the times of the creche clear. Usually, the parents (or the group) would be responsible for their children outside of sessions (meal times, breaks, bedtimes). If you can provide evening baby-sitting or creche provision during the breaks, then great - but remember that the creche workers also need time off.

We feel that there are advantages to leaving the children at home and that it is important to discuss these with participants. For example, there is more time to think and relax without interruption, the kids get used to other people and the idea that you have another life and you begin to feel more relaxed about leaving them. Make sure that you offer support to people who are leaving their children behind for the first time.

Food

Food is very important - listening to complaints about the food is very wearing - especially as there is often not much you can do about it once you are there. (Especially at weekends when shops close on Sundays.)

Ask for a sample menu: and make sure that all dietary needs can be catered for and that the cook has had experience of them before. If not, make sure that you are very specific about your needs - and that they can handle variety. (Vegetarians will not appreciate a whole weekend of omelettes.)

If arrangements can be made so that those with different diets are served at the same time and manner as everyone else, people will feel more a part of the group. For example, if Halal meat is required by some of the group - why not have all the meat dishes made with Halal meat?

General issues

A venue which has experience of arranging this kind of event is preferable. Make sure that they know the nature of the programme and what your requirements are .pa for privacy and non-interruption. Explain that there will be group and pair work – people wandering around – and displays will be up.

"Signing-in" procedures:

> some venues require forms to be filled in before keys are distributed. Letting people know what to expect will reduce annoyance.

Flexibility:

> Will they be unduly concerned at last minute changes in arrangements? Children often unexpectedly come or don't come due to illness or childcare arrangements breaking down.

Promises:

> Make sure that you and the venue organisers are clear about what facilities can be provided, particularly any arrangements for people with disabilities, BEFORE you get there. Send written information about your needs to the venue organisers and make sure that participants know what to expect. Don't make empty promises.

Evaluation:

> A form to use to evaluate the facilities and arrangements which can be filled in by participants and sent to the venue is included in **Working Paper 9**.

Chapter Summary

Practical issues are important. Programme organisers should take responsibility for ensuring adequate allocation of funding, time, and resources to planning, organising and developing programmes. Finding the right tutors and participants, putting them in a comfortable environment and making sure that their needs are addressed will help any group to learn from each other but will also take some effort.

The campaign for equal opportunities has not yet been won – and learning programmes do not exist in a vacuum. Consequently, committee members may not always be aware of all the issues concerning blocks to participation, venues will not always provide creches or accessible toilets and publicity may not always be sufficient to address needs adequately. The key to progress must be to constantly develop our awareness and practice and to challenge others to take up the issues. The involvement of campaigning groups in programme committees will help to keep the issues alive, but others *must* take them on if any changes are to be made. Programme organisers will find that difficult decisions taken by a representative group which has clearly considered the options available will be easier to live with.

CHAPTER TWO

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Getting to Know Each Other is an essential part of the development of a group which can learn from each other as people will only participate if they feel reasonably confident in the group. How do you ensure that your group will respect each other's views and support and challenge each other? The chapter begins with methods of mixing the group so that everyone meets each other. To help your sessions get off to a positive start, the issues to consider when selecting warm-up exercises are explored and correspond to a number of examples included in the **Working Papers**. Methods to encourage participants to network and share their experiences, build a group identity and develop skills to keep the group healthy and participative are outlined. The chapter also includes exercises to assist the development of participation through sharing your planning and facilitating skills.

The exercises in this chapter can be used in *any* adult learning programme with only minor adaptations for use with participants from other fields. Although particularly useful at the beginning of a programme, they can be used throughout to promote a sharing atmosphere in the group.

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Exercise 2.12 *Using warm-ups*
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Exercise 2.15 *Selecting appropriate learning methods*

A. MIXING IT UP

Helping a group to Get to Know Each Other often means breaking up into smaller groups to further this process. In the early stages of a programme, the tutor should engineer how the groups are formed to vary the combinations of people in small groups and pair work. Careful planning, including thinking about the composition of the groups and monitoring who has worked together, will help participants to form relationships and feel more comfortable in the group.

When selecting participants for a small group or pair, the following points might be considered:

> Who has worked together so far? Keep records of the pairs and groupings in the early stages of the programme until you are sure that people have mixed.
>
> Should groupings be representative of the experience in the group so that a full discussion of the issue is possible?
>
> Do some individuals need to learn something in particular from other individuals in the group? Complacency with their own approach, ignorance or simply a lack of experience may mean that some people need help to develop a curiosity about varied experiences and backgrounds. A carefully selected group may help to stimulate learning from each other.
>
> Do specific exercises provide a good opportunity for people with similar experience to discover their common ground? A participative programme is an opportunity for support networks to be developed; the early stages of the programme are a good time to make these links.
>
> Do some people work together outside of the sessions? Are they better separated or do they need the security of staying together? How will that affect the rest of the group?
>
> Do some people work in the same geographical area or in the same type of work? Will mixing in small groups encourage links to be made?

Individual needs should be analysed as well, for example:

> Has she been quiet? Will she benefit from being with someone talkative or another quiet person?
>
> Has she been very assertive or dominant in the group? Will she overwhelm the others in this group? Would several dominant people together cause conflict or interest?
>
> Does she have less experience in this area than the others? Will this combination create a stimulating experience or a depressing one – be a challenge or too difficult?

Attention spent on mixing groups at the start of a programme will have positive effects on the level of participation and help the tutors to develop methods of keeping track of individual and group progress.

For some examples of methods or structures for mixing the groups, see **Working Paper 13**.

B. WARMING UP

What is a warm-up?

A warm-up is a short exercise, usually no more than five minutes long, used at the beginning of a session. Warm-ups can be funny, thought-provoking, active, quiet, relaxing, and/or stimulating. The first stage in a getting to know each other process, warm-ups involve all participants in some form of working together and aim to break down barriers and relieve tension in a group. A warm-up can be very simple, for example, suggesting a topic for conversation in pairs or other small group:

> *In the first session after a holiday, participants could look at the various ways in which they celebrated, handled or coped with the event.*
>
> *A group in a sensitive state after a difficult previous session could be asked to think about where they get their support.*
>
> *A session on why people join groups could begin with a warm-up where people talked about their first day in a group.*

Warm-ups can be particularly useful in getting everyone started on a wet Monday morning, in focusing tired people's attention on a late Friday start to a residential, or when your session starts in the afternoon, in helping people to forget their awful morning at work. Successful warm-ups involve everyone and are easy to explain or demonstrate. Both you and the group should feel comfortable about the activities involved.

Points to consider when selecting a warm-up:

If you are using warm-ups for a group which is just beginning to get to know each other, exercises which involve physical contact, complicated acting or anything which could make reserved people feel uncomfortable may not be appropriate. As the group begins to gel and members of the group take more responsibility for the sessions, exercises which involve all three of these characteristics may be used successfully if the tutor and the group are comfortable with them. Think carefully about the individuals in your group: would anyone feel embarrassed about this exercise?

Activities which do not involve speaking in front of the whole group may be preferable in the early stages of a programme. When all of the participants are feeling more confident, some warm-ups can provide an excellent vehicle for demonstrating that speaking in front of a group is possible and fun.

Random selection for participation can make people less worried about when their turn is going to come (or at least makes that worry less focused).

Judging whether a warm-up is appropriate is not always easy. Is someone's laughter due to nervousness? Is someone quiet because she wants to be, or is she feeling out of place? A lot of the moans and groans which accompany warm-ups have good reasons - people may feel that they are a complete waste of time and be embarrassed about them. Other noisy objections are simply a method of letting off steam. The tutor's role must be to ensure that worries are dealt with, sometimes overtly.

> *"You may be feeling that these exercises are a waste of time, but not everyone is confident about speaking up in a group. Let's give everyone a chance to say something in a pair to start off the discussion."*
>
> *Or, "Don't worry about it, it's just a bit of fun to get everyone relaxed before we start."*

Most difficulties can be avoided or predicted with planning and consideration of the individual participants but if anyone is feeling very uncomfortable with an exercise, gracefully abandon it. The aim of creating an atmosphere of equality can be lost if some members of the group are unable to join in the exercise or find it difficult. Watch out for exercises which require literacy, movement, or good sight in case you are excluding some participants. As the warm-up is in progress, check that everyone is participating.

Name Games

In the early days of the course, you, as tutor of the group, will have an easier time remembering everyone's names than the members of the group. Participants' names will have become familiar and possibly attached to faces and personalities before the sessions even begin through interviewing everyone, writing them letters, sorting out their funding, speaking on the phone about child-care and access issues and keeping records of various kinds.

Even so, getting to know the names in a new group is not easy. Remember that it is more difficult for the participants who have not met everyone yet! Include yourselves in name games as participants need to learn your names too. If there are two of you, they may not be able to remember which is which! Particular participants may often be incorrectly addressed by members of the group. The people concerned are not usually amused - particularly if they stand out from the group in some way. For example, the only two "older" women or the only two Asian people may be called by the other's name. Someone with an unusual name may be constantly having to correct pronunciation. Make sure that you get the names right - and then teach the group.

Just because everyone knows each others' names at the end of a game does *not* mean they will remember them for the next session - especially if sessions are only weekly. To help participants work out who is who:

> **Repeat introductions** several times and continue the name games for several sessions. You may also need "refreshers" after holidays or breaks.
>
> Provide the participants with a **contact list** for the whole group, including when and where you can be contacted.

> **Name tags or labels** are often a good idea even if people say they hate wearing them. They will also save a lot of embarrassment for you!

Working Paper 14 includes a number of name game warm-ups which vary in silliness. Your personality is important in projecting the atmosphere you prefer: business-like or with raucous laughter. Each exercise will involve a basic principle in aiding memory - either lots of **repetition** or an **association** to help recall.

Finding things in common

Warm-ups which help participants to identify common experiences, ideas, tastes or fears can be excellent way of identifying support within the group and establishing networks. The aim is to use a game of categories to enable participants to find common ground in an amusing structure. Be sure to include a category which will allow those who have not yet participated to join in.

The exercises might be used in a large national conference where categories might include: where people have come from, what kind of work they do, or why they have come - in order to allow people to pin-point others they would like to make contact with. Other exercises are appropriate for small, new groups to get to know each others' likes and dislikes.

Working Paper 15 includes a number of examples of *Finding Things In Common* games.

Acting games

Acting games used as a warm-up can include mime or roleplay, for example: miming throwing a ball around the group - then making it heavy or changing it into a frisbee; pretending everyone is on holiday and miming the activities; setting the scene for a Parent and Toddler group with the tutors playing the part of new arrivals. Games in which acting is required should probably be treated with caution. Almost any exercise will work with a confident, relaxed and amusing tutor, but if you are not sure about yourself or the group, a few points may be worth considering:

> Acting games may work better with an established group: consider how well the group knows each other and the atmosphere within the group.
>
> Leave space for participants to volunteer in or out of these warm-ups. No one should be coerced into joining in. They just are not everyone's cup of tea.
>
> Be careful about asking people to play a role that they would not use in ordinary life (e.g. asking an adult to behave as a child could be asking for trouble). While behaving differently could be liberating for some people, you will be gambling on whether the experience will be too embarrassing for others.
>
> Let people find their own response to a situation. If a roleplay is to work effectively, people should be able to apply their own personality, language, and approach to a situation. If you demonstrate the "right" way, you may undermine their confidence in a different, but equally valid approach and/or present a method which they would never feel comfortable in adopting.

Maintain a sense of humour, a light atmosphere and keep a sense of the ridiculous. The positive aspect of acting games is that they can be so different from ordinary life.

While we recognise that many people say that trusting games, roleplay and exercises using mime have been used successfully with their groups, we would argue that in our experience, similar exercises have also been responsible for alienating many people from the training sessions they have attended. The acting games listed in **Working Paper 16** are tried and tested and may be used to break the ice.

Personal Statements

Some warm-up games allow people to make and share personal statements about their lives, beliefs, or likes and dislikes. They can be useful methods of helping people to get to know something about the values, interests or experience of others in the group which may not come out in other exercises.

Use your judgment about whether your group is ready to share in this way. If you are unsure, choose an exercise which places less emphasis on individual statements. See **Working Paper 17** for some examples.

C. BUILDING A PARTICIPATIVE GROUP

Building a learning group in a participative approach will mean focussing on encouraging members to support and challenge each other. This section includes exercises to develop working relationships within the group by sharing experiences and discussing their expectations. While these exercises can be used to get the group started, Chapter Six outlines methods of monitoring and evaluating the progress of a group in terms of participation.

As outlined in **Mixing It up**, earlier in this chapter, a practical way to build the group is to start small: encourage individuals to work in pairs and small groups and feed back their findings to the larger group. **Trees** is a particularly good example of this approach. After an extensive sharing exercise in pairs which explores life and work experience, the pairs come back into the larger group to discuss more the more general issues of the qualities that experience has produced. By changing the pairs and small groups, the full group will become stronger because of the relationships built up within.

In addition to the exercises, tutors need to use their knowledge of the participants' skills and experience gained during interviews and sessions to encourage participation and draw individuals into the discussion, particularly during the early stages of the programme. Tutors will also need to make sure that difficulties and differences are not glossed over. From the very beginning of the group starting to gel, the members need to be reminded of the importance of a challenging environment: learning through constructive criticism, appropriate questioning, exchanging different ideas or approaches and timely reminders of other issues to consider. For further discussion of the tutor's role, see the Introduction.

Exercise 2.1 *Things we enjoy about our work*

Thinking about what is enjoyable about work can be a nice positive start to a course or weekend. You could make this discussion last as long as you want!

Aims of the exercise:

- to look positively at work involvement.
- to discuss what motivates us in this work.
- to share experience and information about particular skills, qualities and training.
- to begin identifying common areas.

The exercise:

1. Ask participants to write something that they enjoy about their work on a slip of paper or piece of card.
2. Ask the participants to put their cards in a pile. When all the cards have been collected, each participant draws a card.
3. Participants take turns reading from the cards they have drawn and saying whether the statement is also true for them. In a group of over ten participants, choose people at random until the time feels right. A smaller group could discuss each statement.

   (There is no need for the writer to identify herself.)

   Issues to raise:

   Is this activity important in all of our work or is it an unusual case?

   Does everyone enjoy this activity?

   Does this activity require special skills, situations, materials or training? How can we make them available? Encourage participants to share information about access to opportunities, for training and facilities.

Exercise 2.2 *Hopes and Fears*

The exercise is a good way to start a programme so that participants and tutors can identify areas of concern and expectations. Watch that you do not feel tempted to answer all the issues raised – allow the group to deal with them.

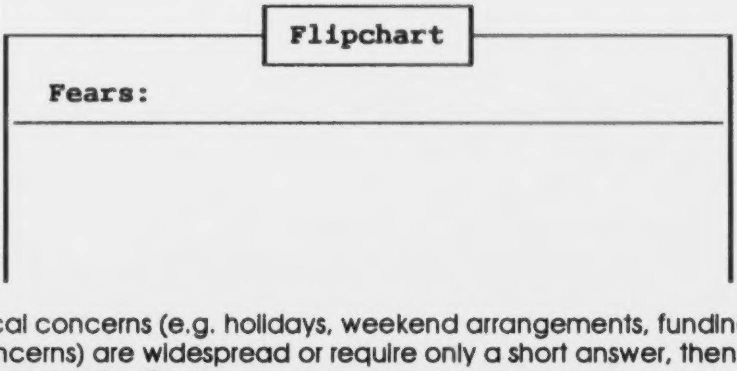
Aims of the exercise:

- to share worries and hopes with others in the group and find issues in common.
- to identify any key areas of concern.
- to encourage the group to develop a sense of responsibility for its members.

The exercise:

1. Divide the group into pairs by asking people to sit next to someone they don't know.
2. Ask the pairs to introduce themselves to each other and to discuss their hopes for the programme and then their fears or worries. Ask them to decide on three hopes and three fears that they both feel are important. Allow ten minutes for this exercise.
3. If the group is large, group two pairs together to make fours and ask each pair to share their hopes and fears. The groups of four should then come up with a list of four hopes and four fears which they all agree are important.

   Ask the pairs (or fours) to feed-back one "fear" at a time until all the "fears" have been written up.



If practical concerns (e.g. holidays, weekend arrangements, funding, child-care concerns) are widespread or require only a short answer, then answer them immediately. If only one person has a complicated problem, tell her not to worry and to see you at the break.

To avoid appearing to dismiss the very real worries that people may have, try not to answer the other fears about the programme. Instead, encourage the group to come up with responses to the other fears which recognise and address them. Invite discussion in the group about the other concerns.

Issues to raise:

Who's responsibility is it to address the fears expressed?

How can we ensure that these fears do not become realities?

Can anyone help out with this particular fear? Any suggestions?

Is this a familiar feeling? Does anyone else feel worried about this?

What can be done about this issue? Can this programme help?

5. Repeat the feedback method for "Hopes."

Flipchart

Hopes:

Issues to raise in discussion:

Are there any trends, similarities or overlap between the hopes?

Will differences between what people hope to get out of the programme create any problems?

Are there any other issues to watch out for?

How do we ensure that this group will work together to realise these hopes?

How do the aims for the programme tie in with the hopes?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Participants could be asked to examine the aims of the programme or course and discuss their hopes and fears in relation to the aims.

- The exercise is a good basis for a "Contracting" or "Ground Rules" exercise. Draw up a list of guidelines or "ground rules" for the group based on counteracting the fears or worries and promoting the hopes or positive factors.
- Keep records of participants' views to use in evaluation during or at the end of the programme. Were the hopes realised? Were the worries justified?

Exercise 2.3 *Guidelines for the group*

Guidelines are agreements set by participants on the way the group will operate and behave. Drawing up guidelines is a useful way to discuss feelings about a group or programme and to develop a common sense of purpose. The process actively encourages participants to take some responsibility for the direction of the programme, the level of challenge taking place and the support provided. Reviewing the guidelines both individually and collectively is a good basis for evaluation.

Guidelines would usually cover:

> **practical issues**, such as smoking, timing of sessions, breaks, coffee money, washing-up rota, what to do if you miss a session, etc.,
>
> **content**, such as what the group wish to cover and what they do not,
>
> **group dynamics**, such as the need to encourage support and participation within the group, how to handle challenge and conflict within the group, what to do about confidentiality, the need to focus on issues such as anti-racism, anti-sexism, disability and class issues.

Methods to use for drawing up guidelines can include:

- Looking at the aims of the programme to see whether the guidelines match the aims. Don't forget to set a date for reviewing the guidelines.

- Using an exercise to reveal feelings about the group, such as the previous one, **Hopes and fears**, sharing in pairs, or a brainstorm. Guidelines could be drawn up to emphasise the positive feelings and work against the negative.

- Breaking into groups to propose guidelines and then sharing the results to draw up an agreed list.

- Providing sheets of paper on the walls for people to wander up and add ideas as they come. After a "milling" period, discuss and agree a common list.

- Asking individuals or small groups to draw up lists of "I would like this group to ----. I would not like this group to ----."

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- See **Chapter Six** for a number of suggestions on ways to use the guidelines in monitoring the development of the group.

Exercise 2.4 *Trees*

Trees is a fairly intense "Getting to Know" exercise which allows people to share their past and what has formed their outlook on life and approach to their work. The exercise is described in pair work so that everyone draws their "tree", but other approaches are described in **Additions or variations**. If pairs are used, careful selection can be important - and planned beforehand to "matchmake" in a positive way.

Lots of flipchart paper and pens are required. You will need at least two hours for this exercise.

Aims of the exercise:

- for participants to share their life and work experience.
- to provide opportunities for bonding in the group.
- to focus on what participants have in common with the rest of the group and to help them to discover these facts.

The exercise:

1. Introduce by describing the way a picture of a tree is going to represent past experience. Draw examples as you go through the possibilities:

> *We are going to draw a picture of our experience using the form of trees: starting with our roots which will represent our family background and the situation we were born into. Were these strong roots? Mixed up and tangled? Are they of lasting importance and still holding us up?*
>
> *The trunk will represent our upbringing and time at school. Is your trunk thin, wavy or strong, stable?*
>
> *The branches are the different areas of our life: family, work, leisure activities, education and training, friends, etc. Are some stronger and straighter? Do some move into other areas? Do they balance each other?*
>
> *Use the picture to say something about yourself: Are there any flowers, fruit, or ivy growing on it? Do you have any cut off branches? Is the tree leaning, does it have sideways growth, or is it lop-sided with varying areas of growth? There may be a stake to support you - family or friends or political ideas.*
>
> *You will draw your tree with a partner, so this is an opportunity to meet someone else here today and to get to know more about the experience and qualities they have to offer this group.*

2. Agree a few ground rules about confidentiality and let people know that they will not be obliged to display their tree to anyone else.

   Read out the pairs and give each person a flipchart paper and thick pen. Allow at least half an hour for each tree.

3. As pairs begin to finish the task, bring them together to make fours. Tell them that they do not have to show their trees to each other – but to share ideas about the exercise itself. What did they learn from the exercise?

4. Bring the group together to discuss the experiences and qualities in the group. The discussion should aim:

   - to discover the areas of common experience within the group.
   - to share learning experiences (good or bad experiences which have contributed to learning) and qualities we have developed (e.g. patience, tolerance, perseverance, adaptability, etc.)
   - to develop a positive feeling about the group: that it is made up of interesting, experienced and supportive people.

Summarise periodically on similarities or differences and make positive statements about the experience.

Flipchart

Experiences and Qualities:

Questions to prompt discussion:

What new things did you learn about your partner in this exercise?

What did you learn about yourself?

What things did you have in common on your trees?

What were the major differences?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Rather than expecting everyone to draw a tree, the exercise may work well in a small group where people volunteer to draw a tree.

- Concentrate on one aspect of life rather than the whole: e.g. **how I came into community work** or **my work for the last two years**. The routes into the work could be drawn as a tree. This approach could also be useful as a method of shortening the feedback of a "whole" tree: ask participants to feedback their routes into community work rather than their total experience.

- Try some other metaphors or methods of drawing pictures of experience:

    The "people in my life" could be drawn as "fish in the pond" with other metaphors adopted as appropriate: pikes, goldfish, frogs, pond weed, heron, etc.

    A "road map" to represent life or work experience as a road which wanders around, has ups and downs, cul-de-sacs, various interesting events or points of interest.

    A "treasure map" could use a similar idea, but include a goal.

    A "ladder" could show the steps towards a goal. This metaphor may be more useful to represent a plan for the future. Not everyone's life is viewed as a continuously rising sequence! (See **Working Paper 24** for a worksheet on a planning ladder.)

    A "pie" could be drawn with different slices representing the different areas of interest or activity. The size of the slice would be related to the participant's level of interest or commitment.

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Life pictures

Any of these pictures could be an excellent "frontispiece" for a portfolio.

Exercise 2.5 *Listening skills*

The exercise requires a lot of blank flipchart paper, a private room (interruptions are a real intrusion in this exercise), a watch and an even number of participants.

Aims of the exercise:

- to encourage good listening skills through practice.
- to practice some paraphrasing techniques.
- to help build healthy interaction in the group.

Warming-up: *Feeling words*

Put up several sheets of flipchart paper on a wall or lay them on a table. Introduce the exercise by saying that as a warm-up to some listening exercises, we are going to think about the variety of feelings that people may want to talk about or express.

Ask participants to suggest some general categories of feelings: e.g. angry, sad, happy, worried, and write them on different sheets or sections of the paper.

Participants are then encouraged to write different related words under or around them. (For example, "vexed", "irritated", "mad", "cheesed-off", "annoyed", "burning", "raging", "bad-tempered" would all be written near "angry.")

Discuss how the words could be graded according to the strength of feeling represented and how the vocabulary may be appropriate in different situations.

The exercise:

1. Introduce by saying there will a series of exercises to build on particular listening and basic counselling skills.
2. Split the group into threes.
3. Introduce the first listening exercise: **Listen and re-tell**

   Describe the exercise:

   One person in each group is to take a turn in talking to the other two for a couple of minutes. The other two just listen. They can nod, say "yes?", "um", or "great" as one word encouragements, but otherwise, they should not talk.

   The two listeners then try to recall what the speaker said and retell the story using a lot of the same words if possible. When they have finished, the speaker should let them know how accurate their version was.

   The exercise will be repeated twice so that everyone has a turn being the speaker.

Give a choice of topics which are not too personal, e.g. either: *a good thing that happened last week, or, why I don't have enough time to do what I like.*

4. Start the exercise and repeat twice. You may want to time the speakers to stop the listeners interrupting. (If they know they only have to listen for a restricted period, they may find it easier.)

   Let the groups discuss amongst themselves what the exercise felt like. Were they good listeners?

5. Split the threes into pairs and introduce the second listening exercise:

   Important feelings

   In this exercise, one person speaks while the other listens particularly for the feelings being expressed. Think about the words in the warm-up. Which words most accurately sum-up the level of emotion?

   When the speaker has finished, the listener should share her understanding of what the speaker has said as well as their choice of words to sum up the feelings.

   Then the pairs will switch roles.

   Ask the pairs to speak for a couple of minutes each on a topic which is not too personal, but will involve strong feelings, e.g. either: *people I don't get on with or, an emotional childhood memory.*

   Repeat to give the other a turn.

   Let the pairs discuss amongst themselves how the exercise worked.

6. Change the pairs if necessary and introduce the next exercise:

   Paraphrasing

   Paraphrasing is when you give a shorter version of what someone has said – using words which don't change the meaning. Either the same words – or words which accurately reflect the level of emotion. Paraphrasing should not interpret or add to the story.

   The pairs should take turns in the role of speaker and listener. Topics could be: *What is important about my work?* or *Something which happened to me last week that I am thinking about.*

7. Put the pairs together in fours to talk about how they rate themselves as listeners. What got in the way of good understanding?

8. Feedback to the full group:

Flipchart

What gets in the way of good listening?

9. Discuss the skills involved in listening and encouraging others to talk.

Flipchart

What can encourage others to talk?

Issues to raise in discussion

How important is:

- advice-giving?
- self-disclosure?
- relevant questioning?
- note-taking?
- confidentiality?
- privacy?
- eye contact?
- understanding?
- opinions?
- support?
- atmosphere?
- smiling?
- comfort?
- body language?
- acceptance?
- friendship?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Relate or follow-up this exercise with **Exercise 2.6 *Personal Qualities used in my work***.

- Collect some information about Counselling courses for people who are interested in following up this training.

- Follow-up with a discussion about listening skills in our work:

  How important is good listening in our work?
  When do we need good listening skills?
  What kinds of problems or issues do we encounter?
  When would we be bad listeners – what do we do about that?
  How can we make sure that we improve our listening skills?

Exercise 2.6 *Personal qualities needed in my work*

In small groups, participants discuss different personal qualities and why they are important. Cards need to be prepared *beforehand* and a worksheet can be used to facilitate discussion.

Thanks to Lynn Moss for the idea for this exercise.

Aims of the exercise:

* to explore the personal qualities which are useful in community work.

* to raise self-esteem through the valuing of personal qualities.

* to think about how we present ourselves and why this is important in our work.

* to discuss the limitations in how we present ourselves.

The exercise:

1. Before the session: Make several complete sets of cards from **Hand-out 2.6**.

2. Introduce the exercise by going through the aims.

   Explain that each group will have a set of cards with words which define different personal qualities. Each group will need to agree which qualities are essential for our work, which ones would not be appropriate, and to rank the others in between. They need to discuss why each card should go in a particular place.

   Warning: Some of the vocabulary may need clarification.

3. Split the group into groups of three or four and give each group a set of cards.

4. Go around the groups and ask them to verbalise why the qualities are essential or are inappropriate. Encourage participants to discuss the pros and cons of the middle ground. Why are some cards in the middle? Are some qualities more valuable in certain settings? Why is this true?

5. Ask the groups to report back on the "middle ground" cards only and to state why they can be useful as well as inappropriate.

Issues to raise:

Are some qualities useful only in particular situations?

Are some qualities better hidden?

How do or can we acquire the essential qualities?

How do we pass on qualities?

Which qualities are easy to pass on to others?

Can people change themselves? How do people change?

6. Ask participants to begin to fill in **Worksheet 2.6** individually.
7. Group participants together to discuss their worksheets.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Use the cards to discuss the personal qualities required in a particular area of work, e.g. counselling, committee meetings, or when working with a particular group.
- Select appropriate cards to play "In the manner of a word." (See **Working Paper 16**.)
- Follow with a discussion of strengths and weaknesses: Which qualities do we have? Which are we lacking? What do we do about these strengths and weaknesses? (See **Exercise 2.8** ***Strengths and Weaknesses***.)
- Link with **Exercise 2.4** ***Trees*** to think about how qualities are gained.
- Discuss the way we present ourselves as an issue in community work. (Link with **Exercise 3.7** ***Roles of a Community Worker***.)

Issues to raise:

How "natural" is our work?

What do we do about personal involvement? Should we limit it? How?

How much are personal relationships important in our work?

How do and can we get support?

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Personal Qualities

Participants use the worksheet as a basis for an analysis of the qualities required in work.

Handout 2.6 *Personal Qualities Cards*

Make several copies, cut up and stick onto index cards:

Caring

Judgmental

Calm

Good listener

Attentive

Laid back

Careful

Assertive

Aggressive

Withdrawn

Good tempered

Emotional

Depressed

Sympathetic

Strong

Helpful

Blunt

Self assured

Confident

Confidential

Interested

Proud

Opinionated

Having a good sense of humour

Friendly

Open

Persuasive

Worried

Flexible

Helpful

Patient

Committed

Excitable

Honest

Rigid

Amusing

Energetic

Politically aware

Tenacious

Empathetic

Organised

Challenging

Anxious

Mature

Loud

Capable

Frantic

Persistent

Accepting

Concerned

Questioning

Relaxed

Will try anything

Quiet

Insecure

Out-going

Young

Knowledgeable

Full of ideas

Reliable

KATE
SAPIN
GERALDINE
WATTERS

Worksheet 2.6 *Personal Qualities in Community Work*

Fill in the sheet with some of the personal qualities required in your work and why you find them useful. Continue down the sheet.

To be an effective community worker, I need to be:

because:

I need to be:

because:

D. NETWORKING

The exercises in this section build on those in the previous one to assist the development of working relationships within the group that will be carried on in work practice. The exercises will help to establish or increase awareness of the breadth of experience within the group and suggest ways of working together.

Tutors should encourage participants to meet outside of the sessions and share information about meetings, conferences, and training events as well as on-going work. Personal and work contacts made within the group can be one of the major positive outcomes of participating in a programme. The relationship between a participative programme and work practice is a natural process in all of the Learning From Each Other exercises but can be given extra emphasis with these networking exercises. Other possible suggestions can include action learning pairings or co-counselling arrangements.

Exercise 2.7 *Range of experience*

The range of experience exercise facilitates the sharing of information about the kind of work involvement which exists within the group. The method provides the information for links to be made and can be followed up through: additional group exercises to make arrangements for meeting, individually with the encouragement of the tutor, or independently by the participants concerned.

If used near the beginning of a programme, the exercise can be a useful way to demonstrate the range of experience in the group and help a positive approach to the programme and participative learning. With an established group, the networking potential will be greater.

The exercise can be used as a warm-up for a variety of participants and sessions. Use the structure and substitute your own headings.

Flipcharts prepared earlier need to be posted where additions can be made. Make sure that you have plenty of extra pens.

Aims of the exercise:

- for participants to discover areas of work or experience which they have in common.
- for participants to see the range of experience which exists in the group - the skills, qualities, and experience which are available for them to learn from each other.

The exercise:

1. *Before the session,* decide on a number of areas of work or experience which members of the group are likely to have in common - these will be the headings for flipcharts to be displayed.

The headings could include:

the variety of groups they have worked with (e.g. young women, Under-5's, Council officers),

feelings which they have experienced at work (e.g. feeling peripheral to the priorities of the group, organisation or agency, having difficulty managing conflicting demands),

roles they have filled (e.g. centre-based worker, outreach worker, supporter, judge).

2. Distribute a number of pens and ask the participants to make comments under the different headings. Tell them that there is no need to put their names down.

   Allow time for reflection, reading and encouragement of reluctant participants. Watch out for competitiveness - encourage people to read the other contributions.

3. The exercise could usefully lead into a coffee break where entries continue to be made with less pressure.

4. Sum up the range of experience represented and point out any unusual examples, differences and similarities. Emphasise the positive aspects of the variety of experience available.

   Encourage questions and discussion of the entries to develop a network of interest and support. Follow with an exercise to make links, e.g. **Exercise 2.10 *Visits*** or **2.8 *Strengths and weaknesses*.**

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Type up the flipchart notes and circulate them so that the group has a record of the range of experience in the group. The lists will also be useful for displays and reports about the programme to demonstrate the breadth of experience in the group.

Exercise 2.8 *Strengths and Weaknesses*

Warning: Although this looks like an easy exercise in sharing experience, identifying strengths and weaknesses is a difficult task. A Worksheet is provided so that participants can record their strengths and weaknesses.

Aims of the exercise:

- to share areas of strength.
- to promote networking within the group.
- to discuss areas of weakness and how they might be worked on.

The exercise:

1. Give each participant **Worksheet 2.8** to fill in. Tell them that they will *not* have to reveal their weaknesses to the group.

   Encourage everyone to write three things which they feel confident about. Ask them to think about experiences, skills, qualities which they can share with others.

2. Get everyone to tear their sheets in half along the line.

3. Everyone should sign and "post" their strengths by putting their sheets up on the wall. (This is a test of assertiveness!)

   Give everyone a chance to read the notices. Summarise and point out some interesting ones.

4. Everyone should put their "worries" in a pile. Mix up the pile and get everyone to select one at random.

5. Go around the group. Each should read out the "worry" which is written down and suggest how one of the signed strengths on the wall could help. Encourage the group to contribute their ideas when a difficult situation arises.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- When participants are posting their strengths, they could do so individually by announcing what they are posting.
- Follow up by getting everyone to write out a plan for working on their weakness which will involve someone else in the group.
- Follow up with exploring some assertiveness skills or definitions (not included in this book but available from many sources.)

Worksheet 2.8 *Strengths and Weaknesses*

I am confident about:

1)

2)

3)

Signed:

------------------------ < Tear here > ------------------------

My biggest area of weakness is:

No signature needed!

Exercise 2.9 *Participants' Fair*

In this exercise the participants are encouraged to talk about the work they are involved with and to display materials, information, publicity for the rest of the group. Ideally, this would be spread over a period of time long enough to allow everyone to display their work and to see the others' displays.

The exercise would usually require some forward planning to allow participants time to collect and bring in material.

Aims of the exercise:

- * to share information about participants' work and involvement.
- * to note the variety of community work experience in the group.
- * to establish a basis for networking.
- * to practice presentation skills.

The exercise:

Arrangements before the session(s):

1. Alert people to the idea well before the session(s). Make sure that everyone has advance notice.

   If more than one session is to be a Participants' Fair, then book people for a specific session.

2. Discuss the Fair in a session nearer to the date(s). Point out that a minimum contribution could be just putting out some materials and answering questions – or just talking about one or two groups worked with for about ten minutes.

   Give some ideas about the kinds of materials they might like to bring:

   publicity, including leaflets, videos, displays.

   photos of trips out and sessions.

   a playbus!

   materials used in sessions, e.g. training material, books, crafts.

   reports of work.

   a diary, or chart on the wall which outlines their activities.

   Participants may be encouraged to invite some of the people they work with to attend the fair.

Discuss the pros and cons of different forms of presentation: e.g. videos are non-participative - could they show a short extract? Schedule the presentations so that not too many videos appear on the same day!

Give advice on other forms of presentation: OHPs, flipcharts, setting out a display, short talk, etc.

3. Arrange video, tape/slide, etc. as requested.

On the day:

1. Arrange a sequence of presentations. Reassure people that they can do it. Find out how extensive the materials are which participants wish to display. Make sure that there are tables available for them.

   If there are lots of things to look at, have a "Milling" session so that people can look around and ask and answer questions informally.

2. Start the first person off. If necessary, interrupt at an appropriate moment, perhaps after ten minutes, to start discussion or questions and answers. To get through everyone, decide on the time limit for each participant (with any luck, at least twenty minutes.)

   Decide early on whether you are going to allow interesting discussions to develop - or keep a running tally of issues to bring up at a later session. Most presentations will raise a lot of issues - but then others will not get the chance to present theirs. (Putting a vote to the group is an option.)

3. Keep a record of interesting contacts / funding arrangements and meeting times which come up.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Follow the session with a visit to a participant's centre or place of work (see **Exercise 2.10 *Visits***) - or hold the session there!

- Finish with a large calendar of events coming up (participants' Open Days or other events) and/or a programme of sessions (participants' times and venues of regular meetings or sessions).

- Have a discussion about how community work can be defined to include the varied experience presented. See **Exercise 3.6 *Defining community work***.

- Follow-up with consolidation of the information presented using **Exercise 2.11 *Plotting the History of Community Work***.

- Produce a pamphlet of what is going on in the area in community work based on the presentations.

Exercise 2.10 *Visits*

This is not strictly an exercise, but contains suggestions about making arrangements for visits between participants' places of work. Visits can be a great way to increase networking in a training programme. They can also provide opportunities to see other ways of working and organising work and to share good practice.

Visits may not happen if left to spontaneous arrangements. A number of contributing factors create difficulties. Participants may think that their workplace will not be very interesting or that they have to offer a special event to interest visitors. They may have heavy workloads and no spare time to make arrangements for visits. Some participants may also have problems with transportation.

Tutors can encourage visits to happen in several ways, for example:

> Allocate a session or more for visits to be arranged as an alternative to meeting as a full group. Some participants would "host" a small group of the other participants: show them around their place of work - or take them on their rounds.
>
> Provide a questionnaire which directs participants to look at certain areas of interest in other centres or places of work.
>
> Put up a flipchart for participants to fill in stating when and where their group or centre would be open to visitors.
>
> Put together a combined time-table of sessions at participants' places of work, e.g. Mondays a.m. Raksha has a drop-in session, Lyn has a Parent and Toddler group, Thursdays p.m. Chris meets the young mothers. Include addresses and contact numbers.
>
> Use your knowledge of the group to link people who share an interest or whose work is related to an issue they want or need to learn about.

Tutors may wish to arrange sessions so that they rotate around the participants' places of work - although finding enough venues with a room which won't be disturbed may be difficult.

The visits may be more valuable if participants design a questionnaire to organise their observations and the information they collect. A session could be spent on research skills which are then employed to compile a directory of the participants' experience.

Visits could develop into "action learning" partnerships or co-counselling arrangements if pairings which work well are encouraged by tutors. If a visit works particularly well, you may like to suggest that a pair sets up a regular time-table of visits where work problems or issues are discussed in turn. Point out the benefits of two experienced minds tackling problems - with the added advantage of one person who knows the situation well and the other who can provide a more detached perspective.

Exercise 2.11 *Plotting the History of Community Work*

Through a discussion of the major changes in their areas of work, participants collect the information to produce a compilation of developments. The exercise could be a useful introduction to each others' situations – or the start of a local history book!

A worksheet can be used to focus attention on the variety of changes and to record participants' findings.

Aims of the exercise:

- to think about the changes in their area of work and how they have affected their work.
- to use the experience of the group to build up a picture of changes in the area – to plot the history of community work through their experience.
- for the group to note and discuss the similarities and differences in their areas of work.

The exercise:

1. Introduce the title of the exercise and clarify the aims.
2. Ask everyone to reflect on major changes in their area of work since becoming involved in community work. For example:

   What areas of work are important now – compared to ten years ago? (e.g. housing or immigration issues? economic events or needs for play facilities?)

   Are local people more involved in community groups or activities, or are they less committed? Are the active people representative of the same kinds of groups in the community, or are new groups getting involved?

   Are the controlling structures different? Has the contact with local authorities altered? Are management committees stronger or weaker ?

   Are equal opportunities issues being discussed more, or less? What changes have there been in opportunities?

   Have sources of funding or the criteria for grants changed?
3. Break into pairs to share descriptions of three major changes in their area of work since becoming involved in community work. Encourage participants to think about economic, political and social aspects of their communities and work by using **Worksheet 2.11**.
4. Bring two pairs together into fours to discuss their changes and note which are common – and which are different.

5. Groups feedback their lists of changes to the larger group.

Flipchart

Changes in community development:

Key issues to discuss:

Note the areas of similarity and discuss the reasons why these changes have occurred.

What has affected the differences?

Are the changes positive or negative? Why?

How can the positive aspects be built on? What does a community worker do in response to the negative changes?

What effect do the changes have on their roles as community workers?

Are these changes due to political, economic, or social changes?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Participants could be grouped according to their geographical area – or their area of work – to pool information about the changes within the particular field:

  Each small group could look at changes in their own locality which have affected their work – and vice versa.

  A small group could look at the changes in play work across the region (training developments, funding, new projects,etc.) while others look at tenants' work, community arts, work with young people.

- Other issues to raise in discussion after the feedback could include:

  What can we achieve through community work? What changes are we looking for?

  The role of the community worker and community work: what do we do as community workers? (See **Exercises 3.7 and 3.8**.)

  What qualities are required of a community worker? (See **Exercise 2.6**.)

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A history of community work in ______

Participants could prepare a story of the changes in their area or area of work – using a "tree", "road", (see **Exercise 2.4**) or a graph using **Worksheet 2.11**. An analysis could discuss the interaction of different sorts of changes.

Worksheet 2.11 *Plotting the History of Community Work*

Think about the changes in the community and in your work.

Fill in the chart stating what was different 20 years ago, 10 years ago, etc.

	Political Changes	Social Changes	Economic Changes
What was different:			
twenty years ago?			
ten years ago?			
five years ago?			
last year?			

How do these changes compare with other participants' observations?

KATE SAPIN
GERALDINE WATTERS

E. DEVELOPING FACILITATING SKILLS

The exercises in this section allow tutors to prepare a learning group to take full responsibility for sessions by sharing their facilitating and training skills. Encourage participants to use examples of courses they are setting up in their work, e.g. Play training, induction of volunteers, supervision sessions.

The exercises can also be used in "training the trainers" sessions.

Exercise 2.12 *Using warm-ups*

The exercise uses warm-ups as an example of how to decide on an exercise to use with a group. By thinking about specific warm-up exercises, participants consider whether and when they would be appropriate. The tutor should make the link between these considerations about warm-ups and those necessary when selecting any exercise.

The exercise would be a useful introduction to a programme on training methods and materials.

Aims of the exercise:

- to increase participants' confidence and expertise in using warm-ups.
- to explore some of the considerations to use when selecting appropriate methods or materials.

Warming-up: *Sharing Warm-ups*

Ask participants to demonstrate some warm-up exercises that they know.

The exercise:

1. Brainstorm on:

Flipchart

Why do we have warm-ups?

See the previous section on warm-ups in this chapter for some points to bring out.

2. Discuss the warm-ups demonstrated by the group. What issues were raised?

Did they fulfil the aims of warm-ups?

What would make a warm-up inappropriate?

Write up the issues to consider when selecting a warm-up.

Flipchart

Selecting a warm-up:

Issues to raise:

- Would some warm-ups work better or differently with particular groups of participant groups due to age, gender, culture, ability, literacy, mobility, class? Why?
- What are the criteria for selecting a warm-up with a new group?
- What warm-ups would we, personally, not be comfortable using?
- What are the pros and cons of work in pairs, work in small groups, work in large groups?
- Why or when would a warm-up with different characteristics (e.g. physical contact, singing, acting, humour, speaking in front of the group, wearing different clothes) be appropriate for a group?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Compile a list of useful warm-ups by pooling ideas with the group.
- See **Working Papers 14 - 16** for some examples of warm-ups. Try them out with the group. Give each participant one to facilitate with the group.

Exercise 2.13 *Facilitating learning*

The exercise uses participants' negative experiences as a basis for devising positive guidelines for facilitators. You may wish to use this exercise with a group whose participation is flagging. Remind them what participative learning is about!

Aims of the exercise:

- to establish guidelines for good practice in facilitating sessions.
- to share ideas about good practice in participative learning.

Warming-up: *A bad facilitator*

Ask participants to think about a training session or discussion which they felt was not facilitated well. Think about the facilitator, how did he/she intervene?

Ask them to share their thoughts in pairs.

The exercise:

1. Introduce by saying that the aim is to devise some guidelines for facilitators – so we don't end up like those horror stories!

Flipchart

Facilitators should not:

2. Discuss the role of a facilitator. Use the opportunity to discuss the value of participative learning. Issues to raise:

   What are the skills involved?

   What experience does a facilitator need?

   How should timings be handled? How do you know when to interrupt?

   How should quiet or dominant people in the group be handled?

   How much responsibility should a facilitator take for ensuring that issues are covered fully?

3. Discuss and agree a set of guidelines for facilitators based on the previous flipchart notes.

Flipchart

Guidelines for facilitators:

4. Type up and circulate as a useful reference and/or training handbook.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Follow with a discussion of the skills required and ask participants to analyse their training needs in relation to those skills. How will they fulfil these?

Exercise 2.14 *Setting up a learning programme*

The exercise uses a worksheet to give a structure to participants' notes about how to set up a programme. A mini-lecture given by the tutor can be based on the material in **Chapter One**.

Aims of the exercise:

- to share ideas about good practice in setting up learning programmes.
- to encourage participants to take on the organisation of participative learning programmes in their work.

Warming-up *How was it set up?*

Ask participants to think about a learning programme they have been involved with: How did that programme come about? How did the organisers know that people would be interested in the programme? Discuss in pairs.

The exercise:

1. Hand out **Worksheet 2.14 *Stages in Setting up a Learning Programme***.

   Use the worksheet as a basis for a "mini-lecture" on issues to consider when setting up a learning programme. Use the notes in **Chapter One: *Nuts and Bolts*** as a basis. Point out that the list is limited and does not include publicity, recruitment, selection, setting up a committee, etc.

2. Ask participants to contribute their ideas to the points covered.

   Have they had experience of planning programmes in this way?

   What problems did they encounter?

   How did they overcome difficulties?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Use the worksheet as a basis for small groups to share their experience of organising learning programmes. Ask them to feedback to the larger group to come up with a statement from the group on good practice in this area.
- Discuss the similarities and differences in planning participative learning and planning community work.

Worksheet 2.14 *Stages in planning a learning programme*

Fill in the sheet with your notes about issues or questions that need to be addressed at each stage. Who should be involved? How is this done?

1. Identifying the need for a learning programme

2. Setting the aims

3. Selecting the exercises

4. Evaluation

Exercise 2.15 *Selecting appropriate learning methods*

The exercise uses a worksheet to prompt small groups to discuss alternative methods used in teaching and training sessions. The tutor should emphasise the need to involve learners in the sessions – and a discussion of the benefits of participative learning should naturally arise.

The exercise is used to plan a future session on the learning programme itself – so will need to be preceded by finding out what participants want or need to cover.

Aims of the exercise:

- to discuss the aims and methods of participative learning.
- to consider different learning methods and when they are appropriate.
- to encourage a creative approach to planning learning session, and the use of alternative methods.
- to discuss the methods or materials to use in a particular session.

The exercise:

1. *Before the session,* decide on the aims of the sessions to be planned in groups and fill in the worksheet appropriately. For example: to look at the responsibility of a management committee, to improve listening skills. The aims should have been agreed by the group as something they would like to cover.

1. Go through **Worksheet 2.15 A** and make sure that everyone understands the terms used.

2. Discuss the advantages of each method in terms of the involvement of the participants.

Flipchart

Pros:	**Cons:**
e.g. Brainstorm:	
can involve many participants	***can be disorganised***

Go through the different methods in turn.

Issues to raise:

- Is this method appropriate for particular skills, information, awareness-raising?
- When would this method be inappropriate?
- What are the practical considerations?
- Are any special skills, qualities, knowledge required to use this method?
- How can we acquire any specialist training?

3. Divide into planning groups of three or four people to look at different methods which could be used in a particular session. The groups could be arranged so that each looks at the aims for a different future session on the learning programme they are all involved in or alternative ways of doing the same session.

4. Distribute **Worksheet 15 B** to the groups and ask them to plan their session in more detail: deciding on timings and materials and allocating tasks.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- The session could be used to look at a particular course which participants have already run, e.g. management committee skills, play training course.
- **Worksheet 15 B** may be looked at in a separate session where a full discussion about sequencing learning could be held.

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Appropriate methods for learning

Participants use **Worksheet 15 A** to demonstrate an awareness of the relationship between aims and objectives in learning programmes as well as an understanding of the differing needs of groups.

Worksheet 2.15 A. *Selecting Appropriate Methods for Learning*

Fill in the worksheet using an agreed set of aims for a learning session.

Aims for the session:

1. How could you use the following methods to reach these aims:

   Case Study

   Discussion

   Brainstorm

   Questionnaire

   Experiential exercise or roleplay

   Presentation (video, lecture, display)

   Action Learning

   Other

2. Did you find that some methods were more appropriate for these aims?

   Why?

3. Would some methods be more appropriate for different groups? Why?

Worksheet 2.15 B. *A programme for a session*

1. *Fill in the aims for the session.*

2. *Think about:*

   - *the appropriate exercises to use*
   - *what sequence to use*
   - *how much time to allocate to each exercise*
   - *who will take responsibility for each bit*
   - *what materials will be needed.*

3. *Record your decisions on the sheet so that each of you has a programme for the session.*

Aims of the session:

Time/Materials	**Exercise**	**Who will do it?**

CHAPTER THREE

WHAT IS COMMUNITY WORK?

This chapter promotes thinking about community work values and the stages involved in a community work approach. The chapter starts with some basic exercises to encourage participants to share their understanding and practice and moves on to consider the links between this practice and the underlying aims of community work.

Exercise 3.1 ***Taking a closer look at "community"*** **page 90**

Exercise 3.2 ***Getting to know an area*** **page 92**

Exercise 3.3 ***Making contact with the community*** **page 95**

Exercise 3.4 ***Barriers to community involvement*** **page 99**

Exercise 3.5 ***A community development case study*** **page 106**

Exercise 3.6 ***Defining community work*** **page 115**

Exercise 3.7 ***Roles of a community worker*** **page 120**

Exercise 3.8 ***But is this really community work?*** **page 125**

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

What do we mean by community work?

The essential elements in community work are *change* and *challenging inequalities* through *group action.* Community work has developed out of people's actions to change their lives and the communities in which they live. The method of work uses the skills, qualities and experience of people in a community to work on issues that are relevant to them. A community worker works with the community to identify and develop ways of organising collectively which are meaningful to those involved and move forward to agreed aims.

A commitment to challenging inequalities in society, to addressing the needs of the powerless and to confronting discriminatory and oppressive attitudes and practices, underpins the work. Effective community workers have an appreciation of the importance of the development of personal awareness in collective action. Through becoming involved in group activities, members of the group will gain confidence and become more aware of their potential to change the circumstances in which live. As they work to achieve change, group members gain an appreciation of the consequences of the varied actions they take. The knowledge they gain builds confidence which informs future collective action.

This view of community work is at odds with that put forward by some institutions and organisations who see community work as a means of encouraging others to accept change more easily. Community workers have been employed to build up networks to replace "previously extended family networks", to give credence to community participation without an increase in power, or to provide services for the community. These roles are not community development models because they do not challenge inequalities or involve people in group action to change the way they live.

Community work can be used to effect change at many levels in society. Community workers will work:

- with **groups** which develop from and respond to community needs.
- with **organisations** which work on institutional change (e.g. local and national campaigns, independent bodies, professional working parties).
- with **individuals** to support their development.

Community workers will be involved in a range of activities including:

- initiating the setting up of groups according to identified needs.
- attending community group meetings or sessions and helping to establish healthy relationships within the group.
- increasing participation in activities and services by people who are oppressed.
- increasing access to resources.
- developing local committees to manage community action and resources.
- creating networks of individuals, community groups, voluntary and statutory agencies to increase support and resources.
- campaigning for change by challenging individuals and institutions.
- taking part in committees at district, council, regional or national levels.

Who would find the exercises useful?

The exercises in this chapter may be used at the beginning of a learning programme with community workers and activists to help build participants' confidence in what they know and to demonstrate the value of sharing experience. The links between participants' experience, practice and the underlying aims of community work will underpin future learning and can be used as a reference throughout the programme.

The exercises are also useful for workers in other fields who suddenly find the word "community" attached to their job title, e.g. community social workers, community health workers, community planners. Some workers may suddenly find that their jobs now include a community brief, such as teachers, dietitians or safety officers, housing officers, who are asked to perform "outreach" work, consultation exercises, community liaison work, campaign work, or decentralisation of services. Sharing ideas, information, skills and understanding about publicity, targeting groups and networking would be useful in any of these situations.

Exercise 3.1 *Taking a closer look at "community"*

The tutor works with the participants in a large group: directing a discussion on the concept of "community", clarifying their points, and encouraging a broad approach. By the end of the exercise, the group should come up with their own definition of "community."

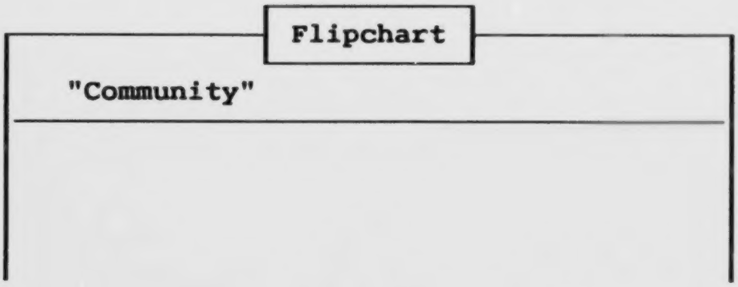
The exercise can be used by any group wanting to begin an analysis of outreach or "community based" work.

Aims of the exercise:

- * to share understanding and experience of what a community may be.
- * to promote recognition of the range of groups within a community.
- * to encourage a positive approach to a definition of "community" which values all members of the community.
- * to challenge, or to encourage the group to challenge, any misconceptions about oppressed groups within the community.

The exercise:

1. Write the word "community" on a flip-chart and ask participants to suggest meanings of the word.



2. Discuss and clarify the participants' suggestions:

   Does everyone belong to a community?
   Can you *join* a community?
   Can people belong to several different communities?
   How do you know whether you belong to a community?
   Do some people belong even if they don't want to?
   Are some people excluded from communities – even if they fit the criteria?

Who sets the criteria? How do they change?
How big is "too big" for a community?
Is there a difference between a neighbourhood and a community?
What about an area? a village, a town, a city, etc.?
Does a community have groups within it?
What's the difference between a group, a network and a community?

3. Ask for associations with the word "community":

Is "community" always a positive idea?
What characterises a "healthy community"?
Do they feel part of a community?
What can promote a "community spirit"?

4. Ask participants to come up with a definition of "community" which takes into account the issues raised in their discussion.

Critical elements could include:

- geography
- culture
- language
- ability
- users of facilities
- age
- interest or experience
- religion
- class
- self-perception

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Go through the suggestions of types of communities and ask for clarification, examples and characteristics.

  e.g. a group united by a country of birth which has a different culture and language such as a Polish community.

- Ask for ideas on how to find out more about the particular communities suggested on the flip-chart.

- Discuss whether different skills, understanding or experience are required for work in different communities.

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The community I work with

Participants prepare an outline of the community within which they work (or live) using the definition put together by the group. They outline the criteria which define their community, its characteristics, and a description of groups or networks within the community.

The following format could be used: *The community I work with:*

I. Why is this a community?
II. What are the characteristics of this community?
III. The groups and networks within this community.

Exercise 3.2 *Getting to know an area*

This exercise encourages participants to think about the wide range of contacts community workers need to develop in getting to know an area. The exercise is useful in building up the confidence of participants who are always surprised to discover how much information they have about relevant contacts and contact points. From this base, tutors can stimulate discussion on "developing an organised approach to outreach work."

A group intending to launch a campaign, conduct research into a community, get to know an area better, or start a new job would also find this exercise useful.

Tutors direct a discussion which goes through several stages. The flipchart notes could be typed up and circulated to provide a useful resource for ideas about contacts in the community.

Aims of the exercise:

- to share experience about ways of getting to know an area, available funding, and potential sources of information.
- to recognise the knowledge that participants already have about their area.
- to encourage participants to find out more about their area – particularly about the range of groups in the community.
- for participants to get to know more about each other and their areas of work.

The exercise:

1. Ask participants to imagine that they are moving to a new area.

   What would they want to find out about the new area?

   What kind of information about the new area would be useful?

Flipchart

What do we need to know?

Some categories and examples to discuss:

Geography	motorways, natural and political boundaries
History	population movement, housing developments
People	make-up, needs, cultures, languages, politics, key contacts, activists, friends and enemies
Facilities	buildings, meeting places, leisure and cultural facilities
Funding	available grants and money
Resources	people and groups, equipment and provision

2. Ask participants to think about who they talk to or where they find the answers to these questions. Make a new heading and list the names and addresses of regional organisations, town hall contacts, non-statutory projects and funding agencies, etc.

Flipchart

How do we find out what we need to know?

3. Lead the discussion into the next steps to be taken in working in a new area using a *community development approach.*

Ask participants to share ideas about:

- how to build networks.
- how to prioritise which people, groups and sources of information to contact.
- how to record the information gathered.

Points to raise in discussion:

Encourage participants to question the vested interests of different contacts, particularly professionals and key community members.

Draw attention to the "networking" and sharing of information occurring in the learning group as a method of working.

Encourage discussion of the skills, information, awareness or qualities the worker needs. Do these skills vary with particular groups?

Ensure that the needs of people of different age groups, cultural groups, gender and ability are discussed.

4. Make sure that the notes from the session are reviewed by the group, typed up and circulated for future reference.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Instead of a discussion with the whole group, break into pairs at the beginning of the exercise. One participant takes the "role" of a new worker moving into an area; the other passes on the information about her area.

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My replacement worker

Participants write up notes for a "replacement worker." If someone had to replace them for six months, what information would she need?

List the information under headings: e.g. key contacts, on-going groups, background of people in the area, geography, facilities.

Exercise 3.3 *Making contact with the community*

How often do we hear people working within the community say that they have organised a consultation meeting and only one or two people turned up? or, that they have set up a facility and only certain kinds of people are using it? This exercise concentrates on a basic problem facing people working within a community: how do we make contact with particular groups?

Participants discuss in pairs how to make contact with specific groups and categories of people. **Worksheet 3.3** lists some examples of particular target groups to stimulate thinking about how to make contact with different groups or networks and should be cut into strips before the session.

Aims of the exercise:

* to increase understanding of how we use our knowledge of a neighbourhood and networks to develop contacts with the community.

* to encourage participants to build on their experience and begin to recognise and develop a method of making contact which can be used with any group.

* to identify issues to be considered when making contact with particular communities and community groups.

* to encourage participants to make contact with a variety of groups in the community.

The exercise:

1. *Preparation:* Decide how many examples of specific groups are required and make some slips of paper (or use **Worksheet 3.3: *Making Contact with the Community***) asking participants for ideas on making contact with these particular community groups.

   The feedback for the number of examples listed could take a long time. Limit the mumber of examples for the size of the group and decide whether all of the examples need feedback.

2. Divide the group into pairs and distribute a couple of slips to each pair. Allow them time to work on one or two issues.

   > ***Warning:*** *A number of questions about the task may arise: "How do we know there is a need?" "But I would never do this." "I don't have a clue!" etc. You may need to strongly urge people to have a go "Pretend that your management has instructed you to do it." Remind them that this is an exercise – that they should use their imaginations.*

3. Feedback: Ask each pair to read their slip to the group with suggestions of ways forward. Draw out comments and suggestions from the other participants.

   Some responses may begin: *"We would do all the things that the other pairs have suggested, and ..."* to save repetition.

   Points to consider:

   Encourage lively debate on different approaches. Basic and firmly held opinions on how to make contact with particular groups may vary considerably.

   Make sure that mystification does not put people off. Challenge those who say that the work can *only* be done in a particular way.

   Highlight innovative ideas on publicity and relevant contacts in the statutory and non-statutory sector.

   Encourage participants to think of *all* the people in the community, i.e. different ages, cultures, languages, literacy levels, abilities, interests.

   Ask participants for ideas on how to evaluate the effectiveness of their contact with particuar groups.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Pairs of participants could choose one group to analyse their approach in more detail.
- You may prefer to have the whole group focus on a particular group or a couple of groups by giving everyone the same target areas.

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Making contact with different groups in the community

Participants list the different groups in their community and how they make contact with them.

Worksheet 3.3 *Making contact with the community*

Cut the sheet into strips to hand out.

1. How do you make contact with other tenants in your area regarding the setting up of a **tenants' group**?

2. How do you bring the community's attention to the **Advice Sessions** in the community centre?

3. You are involved in setting up a **playscheme**. How do you contact potential helpers?

4. How do you contact potential members for the **Asian Girls' Project** in your neighbourhood?

5. How do you contact members for the **After School Play** session in the community centre?

6. How do you contact members for the **PHAB club** at your centre?

   (PHAB = Physically Handicapped and Able-Bodied People)

7. How do you make contact with the community in order to set up a **Parent and Toddler group**?

----

8. How do you make contact with the community when setting up a **Luncheon Club for elderly people**?

----

9. How do you make contact with **residents of council housing** to find out their views on decentralisation of housing services?

   (The Council Officers based at a central office have asked you to assist them in finding out the residents' views.)

----

10. How do you find out what **young people** within the neighbourhood want in the way of facilities?

    (young people aged 12 – 16 years)

----

11. How do you make contact with **people with disabilities** to find out their views about opportunities in the community?

----

12. How do you make contact with **women in the community** to set up a steering group for a women's festival on International Women's Day?

Exercise 3.4 *Barriers to community involvement*

This exercise is carried out in small groups and gives participants the opportunity to think about possible barriers for people in the community. By analysing who is serviced by or participating in the services, facilities and community organisations in their area of work, participants can develop a plan to increase community involvement.

A worksheet listing possible barriers will need to be cut into strips *before* the session. A second worksheet is used to plan how to increase involvement.

Aims of the exercise:

- to provide a means of analysing the range of people who use services in the community and participate in community activities.
- to identify possible barriers for specific groups.
- to plan practical steps to removing the barriers and improve use and participation in community activities.
- to encourage implementation of the steps in participants' places of work.

The exercise:

1. Ask participants to think about the range of people who live in the community where they work.

   Ask the participants to think about factors which may affect whether this range of people would be interested in the services or opportunities provided by the organisation or group in which they work.

Flipchart

What would affect people's interest?

Note: Emphasise that they should concentrate on the barriers which the *organisation creates*, not the "difficulties" which the community presents.

2. Divide the participants into groups of three or four and give each group a slip of paper which describes possible areas of discrimination. (See **Worksheet 3.4A *Barriers to Involvement*.**

Ask the groups to define ways in which *any* service or organisation could discriminate in the area they are focusing on. Give them a flip-chart to record their findings.

3. Each small group should fill in a copy of **Worksheet 3.4 B *Increasing Involvement***. Encourage people to think of practical steps to work towards this aim.

For example:

Worksheet 3.4 B *Increasing Involvement*

Issue to consider: *able-ism*

Barriers to involvement	**Short term goal:**	**What can I do tomorrow?**
Access problems community centre	*get some ramps*	*Ring Town Hall re grants*

4. Feedback the issues and the solutions to the larger group. Share ideas on good practice and how to implement and monitor progress.

Flipchart

Increasing involvement:

Good practice:	**Ways to achieve this:**

Points to raise in discussion:

Remember that we are most concerned about barriers to people from oppressed groups in society!

In what ways are the barriers created by unequal power relationships in the society we live in?

What attitudes created these barriers? What keeps them in place?

Which barriers consist of practical issues? *(e.g. arrangements for meetings at pubs as barriers to certain people attending.)*

Which include something less tangible? *(e.g. lack of encouragement, support, or role models)*

Who would need to be consulted about getting more information about these and other barriers? How would you contact them?

What are the essential ingredients of an action plan to remove barriers? (Make sure that monitoring and evaluation are included in the list.)

Share ideas about resources, funding, and participants' good practice.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- After thinking about possible barriers to participation, the groups could feedback their findings for discussion before moving on to thinking about solutions.

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Action plan to reduce barriers

Participants draw up their own action plans to reduce barriers in their area of work or organisation. They should also include monitoring and evaluation methods.

Worksheet 3.4 A *Barriers to Involvement*

Barriers!

1. Issue to consider: *Age-ism*

Think about people of varying ages – how could a service or organisation discriminate on the basis of age? What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

2. Issue to consider: *Racism*

Think about the different races of people in your community – how could a service or organisation discriminate on the basis of racism? What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

3. Issue to consider: *Sexism*

Think about how a service could discriminate on the basis of sexism. What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

4. Issue to consider: *Able-ism*

Think about how people in a community vary in ability – both physically and mentally. How could an organisation or service discriminate on the basis of ability? What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

5. Issue to consider: *Language used*

Think about the different languages people use in your community. How could an organisation or service discriminate on the basis of the languages used? What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

6. Issue to consider: *Nationalism*

Think about the different cultures in your community. How could an organisation or service discriminate on the basis of culture? What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

7. Issue to consider: *Needs of employed and unemployed people*

Some people in your area are employed in various kinds of work; others are unemployed. How could a service or organisation discriminate against people in various situations? What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

8. Issue to consider: *Educational snobbery – awareness of literacy*

How could an organisation or service discriminate on the basis of educational background? What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

9. Issue to consider: *Awareness of health issues*

How could an organisation or service discriminate on the basis of health? What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

10. Issue to consider: *Family circumstances*

How could an organisation or service discriminate on the basis of family circumstances? What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

11. Issue to consider: *Experts*

How could an organisation or service discriminate on the basis of "knowing what is best for people." What could get in the way of people using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Barriers!

12. Issue to consider: *Class*

How could an organisation or service discriminate on the basis of class? What could get in the way of people of varying classes using a service or joining an organisation or group?

Worksheet 3.4 B *Increasing involvement*

Issue to consider:

Barriers to involvement:	Short term goal:	What can I do tomorrow?

Exercise 3.5 *A community development case study*

The exercise can be used to demonstrate a community development approach to working on an issue. A case study is selected on an issue with which the participants are *not* particularly familiar to develop awareness of how their experience can be transferred to new situations. A housing issue is used to detail this example, but any typical community work problem could be used (see **Additions and variations to the exercise** for other examples).

The exercise is carried out in small groups which each look at the same case study. In the feedback, the tutor facilitates discussion to develop a step-by-step approach to ways forward on the situation.

Aims of the exercise:

- to demonstrate the community development approach to working on an issue by looking at good practice through use of a case study.
- to show how our experience in one community work situation may be transferred to another.
- to establish that there are steps or stages in neighbourhood group work.

The exercise:

1. *Preparation:* Devise or select a case study involving a campaign or practical, short-term issue. (See the examples on **Worksheets 3.5 A - F**.)
2. Read through the case in the full group. Take up practical points to clarify the task and situation. Try to minimise concerns about detail by encouraging people to give it a go.
3. Divide into small groups of three or four to consider the case study and what they would do in approaching the issue. Encourage people to detail their responses.
4. Go around the groups to encourage innovation and detail.
5. Feedback in stages:

   Ask each group to record their first reactions on the flipchart. Go around each group and ask them: Is there anything else to consider here? Anything else that should come before this?

   Continue through the steps that could be taken by taking suggestions from each group and build into a step by step approach with stages clearly designated.

6. Conclude the feedback by relating the group approach to this problem-solving exercise to the stages in community work. Emphasise the transferable skills involved in community work and that the participants can move with ease from their practice and experience to the development of theory.

Points to consider in discussion and feedback:

Discuss whether each action is appropriate and debate the pros and cons – particularly the controversial points.

Hold a discussion on the role of the community worker. This may be a good time to consider "What is Community work?" in more detail.

Ask for examples from the group of situations which followed a similar development.

A mini-lecture on stages in community work may be appropriate here to consolidate the stages approach.

Issues to raise in discussing the Housing Case Study on Worksheet 3.5 A:

Stress the importance of the worker's initial reactions to the three residents.

Consider equal opportunities issues at each stage: in publicity, representation on any committee, targeting groups, etc.

How do you assess how representative the three residents are?

How will the public meetings be organised? Think about *when* and *where* and access and timings as well as: *Who will be invited? What preparation is required? How will the momentum be carried on?*

Discuss the role of the Chair and the agenda at a public meeting. Encourage a discussion of possible reasons for and against using particular people, such as the community worker or headteacher as the Chair of a public meeting. Write up a list of other appropriate choices.

Discuss the legality and practicalities of a rent strike, where to find out about rent strikes, and whose decision it is to have one.

Share ideas about where to get information and how to organise it.

Who will do the research and meet Town Hall officials? How will the tasks be allocated?

What is the role of councillors and political parties? How will the group deal with friends and enemies?

What kind of support should the community worker provide?

How will the skills of the group be developed?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- The report back could be organised into stages of community work which could be identified as:

    1. *Finding out about an area or issue.*
    2. *Building links between people.*
    3. *Identifying a key issue to work on.*
    4. *Supporting groups.*
    5. *Building organisations.*

    Emphasise the need for monitoring and evaluation of progress at every stage and discuss how the stages are not separate, but linked in a developmental way.

- Other examples to use as situations to study with groups of social workers or health visitors are on the worksheets which follow: **Worksheets 3.5 B – F.**

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Stages in Community Work

Participants write up an example from their practice which illustrates the stages outlined in the feedback.

Worksheet 3.5A

Case study in a community development approach

Case study: *A housing issue*

You are a full time community worker based in a neighbourhood.

Three local residents contact you. They are up in arms as they have just been told by the local housing office that the Council will not be going ahead with the modernisation scheme for their maisonettes. The Council have promised to start this modernisation for two years now.

The tenants tell you that they are going to stop paying their rent. They intend to organise a rent strike until the Council change their mind and modernise their housing.

They say that they have a good case as the maisonettes are damp and the children and old people have all got bad chests.

They want your help. What would you do in this situation – bearing in mind that you have some time on your hands?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Worksheet 3.5B

Case study in a community development approach

This case study is particularly useful with Social Work students.

Case Study: *Afro-Caribbean Luncheon Club*

You are employed in the Social Services Department working with elderly people. Two representatives of the Afro-Caribbean community have asked you to meet with them. They want your help and advice in setting up a Luncheon Club to meet the needs of the Afro-Caribbean Elderly people in the area.

How will you work with them?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Worksheet 3.5C

Case study in a community development approach

Case Study: *Neighbourhood surgery*

You work in a newly established Community Social Work team. To give a "community orientation" to the work, your team set up a surgery in the community centre and called a public meeting to publicise it.

The surgery has been open for three weeks now, but no one has attended.

What do you plan to do?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Worksheet 3.5D

Case study in a community development approach

This case is particularly useful with a group of social work or care worker students.

Case study: *Campaigning group*

You work in a day nursery and have a brief to work with parents and to develop links with the community. A group of parents comes to see you one morning. They are up in arms. Yet another child has narrowly missed being knocked down while being taken across the road to the nursery.

They want to have a Pelican crossing put up before a child is killed – and they want your help. What will you do?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Worksheet 3.5E

Case study in a community development approach

To use with social workers developing a community perspective.

Case Study: *Playscheme group*

You are a social worker working with children with physical disabilities. Two parents have asked for your help and advice in setting up a playscheme for their children during the school holidays. They feel that play activities would be good for other parents and children in the same situation.

How do you react?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Worksheet 3.5F

Case study in a community development approach

A case for social work students.

Case Study: *New mothers' group*

You are working in a district in which post-natal depression has been identified as an issue of concern for the Social Services Department to work on.

You have been asked to develop contact with women who have young babies and to set up a group where new mothers can provide support for each other.

How will you go about this?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Exercise 3.6 *Defining community work*

Community work practitioners should be clear about the key elements in community work process: bringing people together, working for change, valuing people and challenging inequalities - but many practitioners have not had the opportunity to reflect in this way - or to put their ideas into words. Other participants may be familiar (or over-familiar) with the language - but need to be reminded about how this links with actual practice. The exercise relates the philosophy of community work to work practice.

Tutors need to decide on an appropriate introduction to the exercise. Several suggestions are given. Then a directed discussion encourages participants to relate their experience to a definition of community work. The skills and qualities required are looked at in small groups using a worksheet.

The question, "What is community work?", is big. Participants will need to be put at their ease before they start thinking about defining their work. Tutors should use their knowledge of the group to emphasise the depth and range of their experience. For example, **Exercise 2.7** ***Range of experience*** could be used as a warm-up.

Before the session, tutors will need to assess whether participants need to think about what community work means in their own terms before they look at a definition.

Aims of the exercise:

- to discuss the Federation of Community Work Training Group's definition of community work.
- to think about how this definition is put into action in day-to-day work.
- to increase confidence in expressing community work practices and values in words.
- to recognise and value the skills and qualities needed in community work.

Warming up A: *Defining Jargon*

Make a set of cards with the words from **Worksheet 3.6 A** *Defining Jargon* (one word to a card.)

Hand out one worksheet and one card to each participant.

Ask participants to try to define the word on their card without using the word.

The other participants have to guess which word from the worksheet they are defining.

Encourage discussion of the definitions and debate any mystifications.

Warming-up B: *Thinking about community work*

Ask participants to come up with their own definition of community work by comparing or contrasting it with education or social work.

or,

Go through **Exercise 2.7** ***Range of Experience*** – and then think about aspects common to all community work activities.

or,

Changes I have seen : Divide participants into pairs and ask them to think about three changes that they have seen since they became involved in community work. Feedback participants thoughts to discuss common areas.

The exercise:

1. Distribute **Working Paper 18** which is the Federation of Community Work Training Group's definition of community work.

   Read through the definition stage by stage, and ask for examples from participants' experience to establish the relationship between the two. For example:

Tutor:	*What work do we do that challenges inequalities on the grounds of gender?*
Participant:	*Work with girls*
Tutor:	*What work do we do to enable people to act together to assert control over economic issues?*
Participant:	*Cooperatives and Credit Unions*

2. Distribute **Worksheet 3.6 B What do community workers do?** Explain the task and split the group into twos or threes to discuss the skills and qualities required by a community worker in different aspects of the work.

3. Feedback: emphasise the importance of skills being used appropriately.

   Points to highlight in discussion:

   - the links between the different aims of community work. With more experienced groups, the examples will overlap.
   - the array of skills community workers need.
   - the importance of participants being aware of the skills they have.
   - the need for participants to identify which skills require development.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Follow up with **Exercise 2.11** ***Plotting the history of community work.***

- Discuss the use of "community work" terms and the value of understanding and using them in a positive rather than mystifying or self-important way: to increase confidence, use in reports of work and in committee meetings and raise the status of the work.

  For example, confidence may be increased by being able to say:

  "I am working on changing power structures by ..."
  "I am challenging inequalities with my work in ..."
  "I am supporting local people through ..."

  when discussing work practice.

- Link the work in this exercise with the skills and qualities analysis in **Exercise 4.7**.

- Ask participants to analyse their work with a particular group in terms of the definition.

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Skills and Qualities needed in community work

Participants use the worksheet as a format for analysis.

Why is community work important?

Participants write a personal statement about why they feel their work is important.

Worksheet 3.6 A *Defining Jargon*

Define each word without using the same word in the definition.
Add your own words or phrases .... What is your least favourite jargon word?

networking

neighbourhood

community

localisation

participation

care in the community

enable

empower

local autonomy

a community brief

decentralisation

equal opportunities

activist

Worksheet 3.6 B *What do community workers do?*

1. To bring people together to change institutions or the way they work, community workers are involved in:

   To do this, they will need certain qualities and skills:

2. To value and involve the skills, knowledge and experience of others, community workers are involved in:

   To do this, they will need certain qualities and skills:

3. To confront inequalities, community workers will be involved in:

   To do this, they will need certain qualities and skills:

Exercise 3.7 *Roles of a community worker*

The exercise uses a worksheet and discussion to raise awareness of the fact that community work IS work. As the roles often come naturally to those involved, people can become trapped in a certain approach without considering other options. **Working Paper 19** lists key areas in community work.

Aims of the exercise:

- to establish that there are varying roles which participants adopt with different people or at different times.
- to establish an awareness of why such roles are useful.
- to recognise and value their positive contribution to a groups' development.

Warming-up: *What do they think of me?*

Hand out some small pieces of paper or card and ask the participants to think about a group, committee, or organisation that they work with.

What do the members of this group think of you? Can you think of some words they would use to describe you? Write one of them on your piece of paper.

Ask each to come out and post her/his paper - and say something about what is written on it.

(Use this with a group that has worked together before - as you need to make sure about literacy skills and being able to speak up in the group without too much embarrassment. A variation could be to draw a picture of the word, simply say the word, or talk to their neighbour about what their group thinks of them.)

The exercise:

1. Introduce the exercise by talking about the different relationships we have with groups. For example:

   We all have our own styles of work - and use different approaches with different groups. One style may be appropriate with one group, but not with another. The worker's relationship with a group may also change over time.

   This exercise is about thinking about the relationships we have with groups in order to support their development. We will be looking at our roles as group workers.

2. Brainstorm about the different roles people adopt or perform in their work with groups.

Flipchart

Roles in community work:

If participants do not grasp the concept, try putting it another way:

- *Compare the relationship you have with a group with the one you have with a friend. How is it different – and how is it the same?*
- *What jobs/tasks do you do/perform with your groups?*
- *What kind of work/knowledge/expertise do they expect you to do/have?*
- *Do you work differently with some individuals?*
- *If someone was replacing you, what are the important things that they would have to do?*

3. Ask each participant to think of two different kinds of groups that they have worked with. Using the worksheet as a focus for a conversation in pairs, they should think about what kind of work they do with each group. Make sure that each participant has groups to focus on.

4. Feedback to the larger group about which roles they are happy about, which unhappy about.

Flipchart

Roles we are happy to take on:

Flipchart

Roles we do not like:

5. Discuss the issues raised by the exercise – either in small groups or with the full group.

   Issues which might be discussed:

   Why do we adapt roles we are uncomfortable about? What factors do we take into consideration when we do this work?

   Which roles are ones we hope to be able to pass on to others? Which roles can be passed on more easily?
   Which roles do we perform which are in conflict with one another?

   Are there roles where you don't quite know what is expected of you?

   Are there any situations in which you are trying to perform two or more roles at once?

   Are there any roles you perform where there are too many things expected of you?

   Which roles should we try to avoid at all costs?

   What can we do to get rid of the roles we are unhappy with?

   Which roles require particular training? Do we have any training needs in any of these roles?

6. Evaluation of the exercise: Participants may need time to reflect upon this exercise – why is it difficult? They may wish to discuss taking credit for collective action, "blowing your own trumpet", and/or members of the community who do not see the participants as "working".

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Each participant could look at just one group.

- Include a category which examines the skills involved in the different roles. The pair work could be compiling lists of skills for each role – rather than examining experience with a particular group.

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My role with a specific group

Participants draw a picture or diagram representing their role at a specific groups. For example: The diagram could represent the participant with all the people she interacts with in her work. The participant is represented by a circle in the middle with lines going out to the people she meets. The length of the lines are varied to illustrate how important they are to the work. For example, short lines would show the people met with most frequently. (The people with whom a role is taken on are sometimes described as a *role set*.)

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The people I work with in my role as____ with _____ group

Participants describe their role with some of the individuals mentioned. What are their expectations of me? What do I expect from them? Or, the worksheet could be used as a format for a portfolio piece.

At the women's group, I:

Make tea because_______ .
I listen to problems to________.

Worksheet 3.7 *Community Work Roles*

Name of group:
Type of group:

Your role: Who are you in this group?	Why is this important?

Name of group:
Type of group:

Your role: Who are you in this group?	Why is this important?

Points to discuss:

Can you be positive about your work?
Are there differences between your roles with the different groups? Why is that?

Exercise 3.8 *But is this really community work?*

The exercise is a useful tool to use in monitoring, evaluating and prioritising community work – particularly as community workers are often trapped into working with groups for historical reasons or emotional involvement. Finding a way out of an impasse with a group is not always easy.

But is this really community work? could also be used to estimate the value of work with so-called "service groups" or "support groups", sometimes undervalued in community work and by community work observers. The exercise can often confirm how much change is actually taking place in such groups.

The exercise invites participants to look at two different groups with whom they are working: one of which is going well – the other which is not so healthy. Using a definition of community work, participants work in pairs to assess what they are doing with these groups. A plan of action to identify group members which could share skills, develop confidence and challenge oppression, may help a participant to determine new methods of working with a group. A feedback in the large group is recorded to share good practice.

Aims of the exercise:

* to look at work with two groups using criteria from the Federation of Community Work Training Group's definition of community work.
* to identify how far the criteria are being met.
* to share good practice on appropriate action to take in order to help the work with the groups to meet the criteria.
* to consider withdrawal from the group(s) if appropriate.
* to share good practice on withdrawal.

The exercise:

1. Introduce the exercise by asking participants to think about two groups with whom they are involved. One should be a group which they feel is going somewhere – the second, in contrast, should be one which they feel is fairly routine.

   Invite participants to use their spontaneous or "gut" feelings to identify the two groups. The exercise may help them to confirm or question the validity of this approach.

2. Invite participants to give one or two examples and discuss why the participant feels that one group is working well while the other is uninspiring.

Record the reasons:

Flipchart

Work with a group can feel good when:

Flipchart

Work with a group can feel bad when:

3. Discuss the aims of community work from the Federation of Community Work Training Group's definition (see **Working Paper 18**). If the group has not gone through the earlier **Exercise 3.6 *Defining community work***, you may need to give them an example:

__The ABC pensioners' group__: people are acting together to assert control over their lives by making decisions about how they spend their time and money – as well as what support they require from families and the state. Some of the group would have been entirely dependent on relatives if they had not got out of the house through the pensioners' group. By coming together, they have gained support from each other and challenged the Meals on Wheels organisers to improve the menus – and to deliver them to a communal setting of their choice.

Local people are developing and sharing skills and gaining knowledge through their work with the group, e.g. budgeting for the group, organising skills through arrangements for outings, social skills through dealing with conflict in the group, research skills by applying for appropriate grants, and campaigning skills by lobbying for changes in the Meals on Wheels.

Inequalities are being challenged by working-class members questioning the role and status of Councillors ("He's just the same as all of us really, don't know why he thinks he's got the right to push us around – could have been my grandson.") and insisting on their right to be heard at a Council meeting.

The worker would then assess her role in relation to these aims to decide what level of support they still need.

4. Go through **Worksheet 3.8** ***But is this really community work?***. Ask participants to assess the groups they selected earlier to see how the work in the groups meets the aims of community work. Divide the group into pairs to share their assessments.

5. Organise the feedback so that groups of both ends of the spectrum (healthy and unhealthy) are analysed – as well as one or two which fall into the middle.

Issues to consider in discussion:

- What are appropriate ways of withdrawing from a group?
- What is "non-community work support"?
- What ways of working with groups will increase how they work towards community work aims?
- What are the long-term goals of work with a group?
- Discuss the nature of a community development process. How even is the development? Are there recognisable stages? How do we assess progress?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- The exercise could be linked to the problem analysis exercise 4.5.

- The exercise could be linked to **Exercise 3.5** ***A community development case study***.

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A community work analysis of a group

Participants use the worksheet to produce an analysis of a group and their role within it.

Worksheet 3.8 *But is this really community work?*

Look at a particular group that you work with and answer the following questions:

1. Are local people being supported by this group? How?

2. Are local people sharing their skills, knowledge, and resources in this group? How?

3. Are power struggles being affected or changed by the work of this group? How?

4. Are inequalities being challenged in this group? How?

5. Is the group challenging inequalities? How?

6. What do you do with this group which allows these activities to flourish? (Go through each question again to look at your role.)

CHAPTER FOUR

WORKING WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS

The exercises in this chapter provide a structure for examining work with community groups, developing a theoretical approach and recording experience in order to promote recognition of the value of that experience.

Aims of the chapter:

* to stimulate thinking about the purpose of community groups and the role of the community worker in relation to them.

* to ensure awareness of equal opportunity issues and community participation in group work.

* to develop an overview of groups' development and what affects them.

* to identify problems in community groups, to understand what causes them and to determine how they should be tackled.

* to build evidence of experience, skills and understanding gained through work with groups in the community.

Exercise 4.1 ***What is a community group?*** **page 132**
Exercise 4.2 ***Why do people come to community groups?*** **page 135**
Exercise 4.3 ***Group snakes: the ups and downs in a group's life*** **page 137**
Exercise 4.4 ***Group under the microscope*** **page 143**
Exercise 4.5 ***Problem analysis*** **page 146**
Exercise 4.6 ***Case studies in group work*** **page 149**
Exercise 4.7 ***Group work skills*** **page 158**
Exercise 4.8 ***Group chance game*** **page 162**

What do we mean by community groups?

Community workers work with groups made up of people who come together for a common purpose based on economic, social and/or political issues which directly affect them. Their organisation can be formal or informal, but would not usually be contained within professional, party political, or work force structures. Their aims and activities could include: responding to community needs, providing personal support, campaigning, or collective action.

Groups can be analysed or defined using a variety of criteria, such as: where the power of the group lies, why people join, levels of participation, the degree of formality, or the membership. For example:

> *In looking at the* ***power or control*** *of a group, distinctions can be made between groups which are democratically controlled by their members, those dominated by leaders (e.g. professionals, dominant members) and those which are controlled by outside agencies (e.g. a voluntary Luncheon Club controlled informally by a Social Services Department meals organiser).*
>
> *An examination of the* ***membership*** *could involve an analysis of who participates in a group and how they contribute. Do support groups involve the people they are working for? Does a group set up barriers for particular individuals or groups within the community?*

The role of community workers who work with groups involves a wide variety of skills, qualities and understanding. This often goes unrecognised as many practitioners do not see themselves as part of a "profession." They work with community groups because of their commitment to the issues and because they feel personally rewarded by the work. Others may not value their experience because it has not been validated by established routes to "qualifications. Community work with groups involves working towards democratic control and increasing participation within groups. The particular skills required are based on the aims and values of community work. Further details can be found in **Chapter Three:** ***What is community work?*** and a full list of the key areas of group work is included in **Working Paper 19**.

Planning the sessions

The group work exercises **can be used in sequence** and progress naturally from one to the next. Depending on how much discussion you wish to include, two or three of the exercises could be used in a single session. The exercises can be used with a variety of participants:

community workers who want to improve their understanding and practice of group work by sharing their experience with others. Participants could have experience of **different roles** with groups and bring their perspectives as **members, activists, workers, unpaid workers or management committee members** to the discussion. Their varying approaches should be fully exploited by the facilitator to explore the issues.

other workers who want to learn more about group work can use the exercises to share their experiences of contrasting groups, e.g. adult education classes, social groupings. The tutor can use the exercises as a basis for an introduction to community group processes.

members of a particular group or committee to solve a problem in the way they work together by analysing their aims, roles or practice or to analyse and present their history and development and/or their relationship to the worker.

Groups could use the format of the analyses presented by the exercises in reports to their community or funders; **individuals** could use them to record their understanding and experience in a **Portfolio**.

Exercise 4.1 *What is a community group?*

The exercise is an introduction to analysing group work. The tutor invites participants to contribute their views and experience of different types of groups and their varying characteristics. A discussion about defining a community group allows participants to explore a variety of issues from different perspectives and may be prolonged if a non-competitive atmosphere can be maintained. Reference to **Working Paper 18**, a definition of community work, may be of value.

Aims of the exercise:

- to share experience of different kinds of groups.
- to come up with a definition for a "group" in community work terms which takes into account different needs, aims, and styles.
- to recognise the variation in roles of groups.
- to begin questioning the role of groups with whom participants work.

Warming-Up: *Range of Groups*

Use the "*Range of Experience*" format (see **Exercise 2.7**) but base the exercise on the range of experience with groups. Participants write the names of the groups they have worked with or make comments about their experience under different headings to do with groups. For example:

> *The headings could include different* ***types of groups****: Support groups, Campaigning groups, All-White groups, Dead-end groups.*
> *Alternative headings could classify* ***groups with different members****: Work with women, Work with Under-Fives, Groups of Disabled people.*

The exercise:

1. Introduce the exercise by summarising some of the aims:

    > *We will be working to a definition of "group" based on our experiences. We need to think about what kind of groups we have worked with - what they have in common and what is different about them.*

2. Ask participants to say something about their contributions to the *"Range of Groups"* exercise. Alternatively, get individual participants to comment on the range of experience and views on the different sheets.

Write up key words and phrases under:

Flipchart

Groups can be:

Make sure that the breadth of experience in the group is explored, but watch that confidence is not undermined by over-exposure of very confident participants. Tutors should be able to ensure that everyone's experience is highlighted.

Key issues to bring out in discussion:

What are groups for? (What do they aim to do?)

Why or how do they start or end?

What do the members of a group have in common?

How frequently do they meet?

Where do they meet?

Are there different kinds of groups?

Do some groups only provide a service?

3. Come to a decision on a definition of a group in one or two sentences.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Brainstorm on different types or characteristics of groups, e.g. enabling, service-oriented, democratically-controlled, and invite discussion on what categories their groups fall into, whether their groups fall into several categories, and which are the most rewarding.

- Elicit a definition of groups which includes a way to distinguish the different types of groups and discuss how the aims differ.

> *For example, the participants could decide to distinguish different kinds of groups by where the power lies – discussion would then centre around the aims for democratically controlled groups vs. the aims for professionally controlled groups.*

- Follow with a relevant case study e.g. a problem from the group or one of the case studies from **Exercise 4.6**, for example *Case Study B. All White* or *Case Study N. Coming Out.*

- Discuss the worker's role with different types of groups in more depth. Why do we work with different groups? What do we do? Emphasise the community worker's role as an "agent of change" in work with any group.

Additional issues to raise could include:

Can a group's function change from time to time?

What do healthy groups have in common?

How can different groups be controlled?

Are there any groups that a community worker would *not* work with?

How should a community worker prioritise the groups that she works with?

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Different types of groups

Participants include an analysis of the groups they work with: the purpose they serve and how that affects the way they work with them.

Exercise 4.2 *Why do people come to community groups?*

The exercise invites participants to brainstorm the reasons why people join groups. Reflecting on their own reasons for getting involved with groups can benefit the discussion. If used with participants with varied roles and experience, a number of new insights into reasons for joining can be gained which will enable workers to become more sensitive to members' needs. The exercise can also be used within a group so that members can share and understand each others' motives and needs.

Aims of the exercise:

- to share experience of different motivations for coming to groups.
- to begin analysing whether certain groups meet the member's needs.

Warming-up: *Why does she come to the group?*

Ask participants to think of a person who comes to one of their groups. Why does she come?

After a couple of minutes, ask them to share their ideas about this person with someone sitting next to them.

The exercise:

1. Introduce the exercise by talking about how groups meet a variety of needs - not simply the obvious ones concerning the basic aims of the group.

2. Ask participants to brainstorm on:

Flipchart

Why do people come to groups?

Prompt contributions by reminding participants to use their own experience. Use different words to elicit more responses: What are people's: motives, needs, desires, reasons for coming?

3. Through discussion, classify the reasons which would make people join any group and those which are particular to a certain kind of group. (Circle the reasons which can be common to ALL groups.)

4. Invite individual participants to discuss how their groups attempt to meet the needs of the members. Watch out that confident participants do not undermine the value of the others' experience.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Ask the participants to discuss the motives which help and those which hinder a group's development. Put a plus (+) next to the helpful ones and a minus (–) next to the unhelpful. Can some be both helpful and destructive? What factors determine whether motives help or hinder?

- Break into pair work or small groups for people to share their experience of particular issues in work with groups and to discuss the worker's responsibility in relation to them. The following questions could be used to focus discussion, either individually, or in the form of a questionnaire.

  Are people always aware of their reasons for coming to a group?

  Do people's reasons have much to do with the stated or obvious purpose of the group? How should this affect publicity for the group?

  Are people's needs always met by the group that they join?

  How can we find out whether people's needs are being met?

  How can some reasons for joining conflict with the aims or purpose of a group – and what do we do about it?

  Do some needs and desires balance with others?

  Does a variety of motives or needs amongst the members help or hinder how a group develops?

  How does a worker or a group find out what people want from a group? Is it necessary?

- Follow with a relevant case study e.g. a problem from the group or one of the case studies from **Exercise 4.6**, for example *Case Study A. A Leader* or *Case Study C. Cliques.*

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Why do people come?

Participants provide an analysis of why people come to a group they work with. See **Exercise 4.4 *Group under the microscope*.**

Exercise 4.3 *Group snakes: the ups and downs in a group's life*

The "group snakes" exercise involves participants in looking at the events and issues which have affected a group's development. Participants would need to have in-depth experience of at least one group.

If used within a particular group to discuss their own development, the members can use the format to record and present their own history.

You will need plenty of flipchart paper or a worksheet can be used to record the snakes.

Aims of the exercise:

- to share experiences of both positive and negative periods in the history and development of groups.
- to think about the reasons for changes in a group's "health".
- to think about what is essential to a healthy group.
- to begin thinking about the role of the worker in promoting a healthy group.

Warming-up: *The first day!*

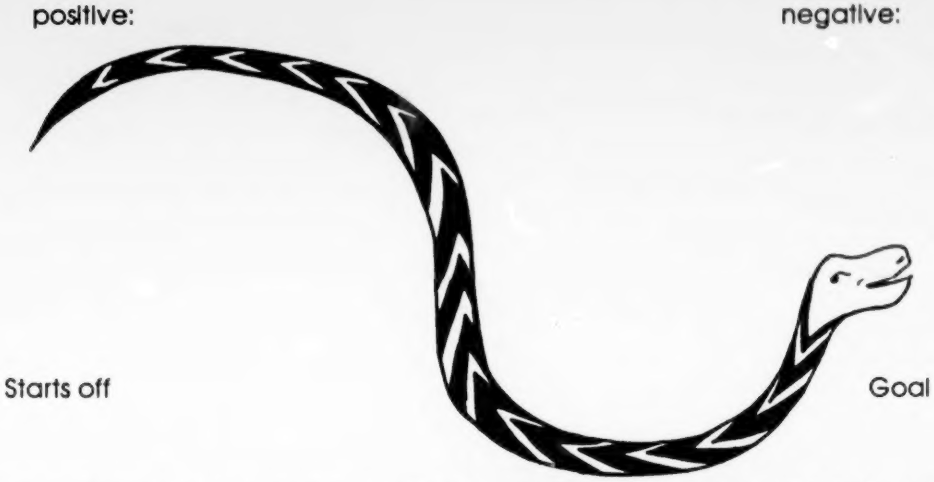
Ask participants to share their experiences (in groups of three) of their first day with a group.

> *What happened? Who did you speak with? What did you think of them? This could be the first time you walked into a Parent and Toddler session - or your first day at your present job.*

The exercise:

1. Introduce the exercise by talking about how most groups develop a series of ups and downs in their health. Use your own experience to give a couple of examples of events or characteristics which helped or hindered the development of a group.

   Describe how an analogy of a snake could be used to portray the ups and downs. The positive factors can be written under a "hump" and the negative ones over the downward slump. (See illustration overleaf.)



You may want to give an example of how a group can start off full of purpose, then various things happen along the way to affect its progress until the goal is reached.

2. Make sure that everyone can think of a group which has had ups and downs. Suggest ideas to prompt thinking – based on your knowledge of their experience. Encourage participants to choose a group which they have worked with for a reasonable length of time – but not necessarily one which has reached a goal.

3. Break into pairs or groups of three. Participants should take turns thinking of a particular group they have worked with and drawing a "snake" of that group's development, including ups, downs, and factors which keep the group on top, or at an all time low.

   Use **Worksheet 4.3** to record the snakes.

4. In feedback, ask participants to give *brief* examples from their experience to brainstorm the "Ups".

Flipchart

These help a group develop:

Post the Flip-chart.

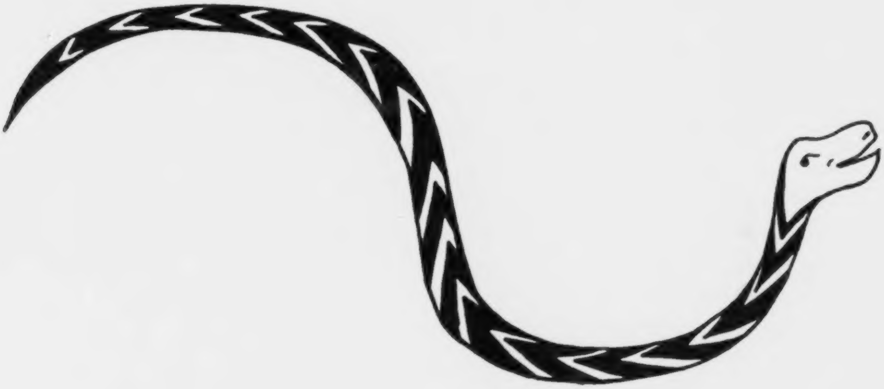
5. Brainstorm the "downs" in the same way.

Flipchart

These can hurt a group:

Post the flip-chart next to the "ups" and draw the "snake" on top of the lists.

These help a group develop: These can hurt a group:



6. Discuss the role of the community worker in relation to these dynamics. Add this to the chart.

Take note of any interesting issues which come up that could be used as case studies in later discussions.

Issues to raise:

Are most groups affected by ups and downs?

What keeps a group healthy and what keeps a group "on a low"?

What happens with "static periods"?

What is the "bottom line" for a low? When do you withdraw from a group or help the group to disband?

7. Agree on a definition of a "healthy" group. What characteristics does it have?

Make sure that community work aims and values are discussed as well as practical issues.

For example,

Do group members challenge each other on issues of race, class, age, ability, and gender?

Is the group open, welcoming, and reaching out to all members of the community?

Are individuals building on their existing skills and strengths?

Is the group changing people's lives or quality of life?

Does the group have key people who can keep it going?

Has the group had any successes in campaigns?

Does the group have adequate and appropriate resources?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- After an introduction about how the "snakes" work, break into smaller groups to share experience on factors which affect a group's development. The small groups should feed back to the larger group to make a big "snake".

- Decide on just one aspect of a group to look at in depth. Snakes could be made of:

  - events which affect development or progress.
  - the types of people or groups which contribute to the group – and how that affects development.
  - how the behaviour or attitudes of the membership can affect "health."
  - the affects of resources on a group.

- Following the "snakes" exercise, go on to discuss the role of the community worker in promoting the "Ups" and dealing with the "Downs. Issues to raise:

What qualities in the members and/or worker contribute to a group's health? (See **Exercise 4.4 *Group under the microscope*** or **Exercise 2.6 *Personal Qualities needed in my work***.)

How do members' reasons for joining affect the group's health?

Which "healthy" factors can be the most important?

Which factors could help or hinder? What determines this?

What is the responsibility of the worker in relation to these dynamics?

What about a group whose values are different from your own? (e.g. a group of parents who want to run a Beauty contest to raise funds, a group of tenants who want to keep out the "undesirables", a group of youth who don't want the "problems" of involving disabled youth)

What if the group's membership does not reflect the community? Is it healthy?

What about a "static" group? What is the worker's role? Which factors apply?

See **Working Paper 19** for the key areas of community work.

- Link with **Exercise 3.7 *Roles of a community worker*.**
- Follow with a relevant case study e.g. a problem from the group or one of the case studies from **Exercise 4.6**, for example *Case Study F. A Static group* or *Case Study J. A language issue.*
- Follow with the "Group chance game", see **Exercise 4.8**.

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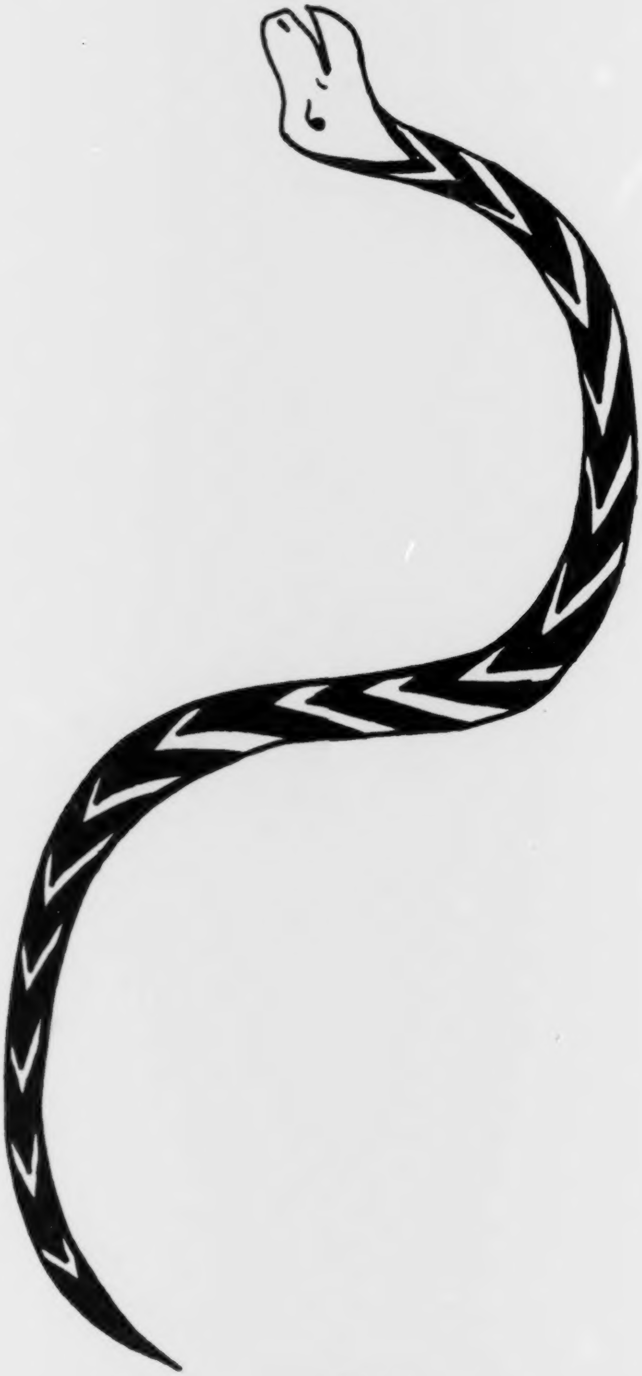
History of a group's development

Participants draw a "snake" for a group they work with and include it in their portfolios.

- Other images may be useful to use in depicting the life of a group. For example:
  - a "train" which members join and leave at different stages bringing baggage with them and taking other things with them as they leave.
  - a "tree", see **Exercise 2.4**.
  - a flow-chart.

Worksheet 4.3 *Group snakes: the ups and downs in a group's life*

Use the snake to record the ups and downs of your group.



Exercise 4.4 *Group under the microscope*

The exercise uses a worksheet to assist participants to look at the members of a group they work with. The sheet can be used during the session to promote discussion and filled in later as a record of the analysis.

Warning: Many community workers find this exercise quite difficult as they have not been used to thinking about individuals within the group. Refer to previous **Exercises 4.2** ***Why do people come to community groups?*** and **4.3** ***Group Snake*** to stress the importance of thinking about the individual members. Make sure that everyone is clear about the aims of the exercise and that no one is worried about confidentiality.

Aims of the exercise:

- to share experience of different styles and types of groups and members.
- to look at a group in detail to analyse how or whether individual members' needs are being met.
- to think about possible areas of conflict within the group.
- to discuss possible options for solutions to conflicts.

Warming-up: *Similarities?*

Ask participants to stand up or get into a position where they can move. Ask them to think about the members of a group with whom they work. Direct them to one side of the room if they feel that those members are very different from themselves. Those who feel that the members are quite similar to themselves should go to the other side of the room. Anyone left over should go into the middle and explain.

Use your own judgment about how much time to allow for this exercise. If the atmosphere is good and noisy, then people will share their experiences in the groups.

The exercise:

1. Introduce the exercise by explaining the aims and going through **Worksheet 4.4**.
2. Go around the group and make sure that everyone can think of a useful group to put "under the microscope."

> *(Note. If you are going on to discuss committees in future sessions, you may want to encourage people to choose a different kind of group to analyse.)*

3. Break into pairs to talk through the Worksheets. Encourage participants to use them as a focus for their discussion. Filling in the sheet during the session should not be required.

4. Feedback: The pairs feedback their comments on the exercise. What did they learn about their group? Was there anything in common between the two groups? Were there any issues arising which should/could be tackled by the larger group?

   Issues to raise in discussion:

   Are members (and workers) aware of the aims of the group?

   Is there agreement on the aims of groups? Are they laid down – or could they / should they change?

   Is there a difference in how individual needs are met in groups with specific aims versus groups with general aims?

   Are the groups healthy, unhealthy or static?

   What if the worker is in conflict with some of the motives?

   What is the worker's responsibility in ensuring that individual needs are met?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Choose an interesting example to look at together – preferably one with a "problem." Encourage discussion which is practically based but not prescriptive – list the "solutions" as "options".
- Use the notes from the feedback for Case Study work in the next session.
- Link with **Exercise 5.4** ***Who should be on committees?*** and/or **Exercise 3.7** ***Roles of a community worker.***
- Follow with a relevant case study, e.g. a problem from the group or see **Exercise 4.6** Case study E. *Worrying mothers* or Case study H. *Neighbours.*

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A Group Under the Microscope

Participants fill in **Worksheet 4.4** to include in their portfolio as an analysis of a group. The sheet can be useful in determining where problems have developed and to plan future work.

Worksheet 4.4 *Group under the microscope*

Name of the Group:

Purpose of the Group:

1. Fill in the members of a group using their initials only.

2. Why do they come? Think about both the hidden and the obvious reasons for why they come. Fill in the chart.

3. Think about whether the group meets their stated and hidden needs and how. Fill in some notes under "Comments".

Members:	Reasons for coming:	Comments:

4. Are there any conflicts between the different members' reasons for coming? Make some comments about why or why not:

5. What could be some of the ways forward for this group?

Exercise 4.5 *Problem analysis*

Participants use a method of analysing a problem in a group they are working with in order to plan practical solutions. The method involves thinking about which factors help and which hinder progress in a particular situation. The aim is to think of ways forward which build on the positive factors and minimise the negative.

The exercise has a brief introduction followed by work in small groups with a worksheet. The feedback takes one example to work through together.

Aims of the exercise:

- to focus on a problem area in a group in order to analyse it and form strategies to resolve it.
- to share experiences of similar problems in order to come up with a variety of possible ways forward.
- to experience a "goals analysis" method in order to develop an analytical approach to problems in the future.

Warming-up: *A problem in a group*

Ask participants to think of a problem in a group or organisation they work with and to share their experience in pairs.

The exercise:

1. Ask everyone to briefly state what their problem is. List the problems on a flipchart and put similar ones together.
2. Hand out **Worksheet 4.5 *Problem analysis*** and go through the sheet using examples to explain how the analysis works. For example:

the problem:	***factors which help:***	***factors in the way:***	***the goal:***
A group is dependent on a worker who needs to withdraw to adopt a supportive role as opposed to a "group member" role	*capable, interested members* *available funding*	*members who are afraid of failure* *members who feel that the worker should organise everything*	*an independent healthy group*

Go through one of the examples from the group or use the feedback from a previous case study to demonstrate how a goals analysis could be worked to organise ideas and develop plans.

3. Divide the group into pairs to take turns in applying the analysis to their problem area. You may want to group people with similar issues together.

4. Go around the groups in order to identify a particularly interesting, controversial, or typical problem that would clearly benefit from a goals analysis exercise.

   A common problem area, such as an equal opportunities issue, would be particularly appropriate.

5. Gather the groups together and go through the issue identified as an example. Ask participants to add their suggestions.

   Write up and distribute the notes so that the participants can use the applied example of the method to transfer to other situations.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Select some case studies (see **Exercise 4.6**) for the group to practice tackling the problem analysis method.

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A Problem analysis

Participants use the format of the exercise to analyse and write up a problem they have experienced at work.

Worksheet 4.5 *Problem analysis*

How to fill in this sheet:

1. Briefly state what the problem is.
2. List the things which get in the way of solving the problem under "factors which get in the way."
3. List the things which may help you to reach your goal under "factors which help."
4. Decide on a reasonable goal which could be reached. Write this under "the goal."
5. Look at the list of factors helping a solution to think of ways in which these could be built on.
6. Look at the list of factors getting in the way and think of ways to minimise or address these.
7. Develop a plan of action.

Name of project or committee:

the problem:	factors which help:	factors getting in the way:	the goal:

Plan of action:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Date of review:

KATE SAPIN GERALDINE WATTERS

Exercise 4.6 *Case studies in group work*

The case studies in this exercise are based on real situations, but more immediate issues may arise in your own learning group's discussions in the previous exercises which should be used. See the notes on the use of case studies in the introduction.

Other notes on case studies appear in **Exercise 5.8 *Case studies of committee problems.***

Aims of the session:

- to share experience in approaching different common problems so that various solutions or options can be discussed.
- to discuss larger issues (e.g. racism and sexism) in practical ways.

Warming-up: *Listen!*

Tell the participants that they are going to practise a listening skill. Find another person to work with. Choose who will go first. The first person is going to talk for one minute about the last time she tried to give someone some advice. The other person has to keep quiet - not say anything more than one word at a time (such as: "Yes?"; "Really?"; "Interesting!"; or "Um.")

Time them for one minute and then switch over. If you like, you can give them another chance with: *"Talk for one minute about how you get support at work if you have a problem."*

The exercise:

1. Before the session begins, a number of decisions need to be made considering the time available and the learning needs of the group:

   Each case will need at least 20 minutes for discussion in small groups. If feedback to a larger group is required, you will need at least 15 minutes for each case.

   Which case(s) will be appropriate for the group? Does everyone need to examine each case? Is feedback to the large group necessary?

   Will feedback involve several groups who have looked at the same cases, or will each group present their discussion of a different case?

   Do the groups need to be planned or is random allocation acceptable? Will the groups be given any choice of the cases they look at?

2. Distribute all the cases being used to the group. Assign each small group at least one case study to start work on. Tell them that if they finish early, they can progress to the others.

3. Feedback on the case studies which seem to be the most important to the group. The facilitator's role is crucial in ensuring that possible step-by-step solutions or options are written up. Include the issues which need to be considered when deciding which option to go for.

   Encourage the participants to value their discussion in the small groups; a general feedback should not always be necessary.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- The most obvious variation to the exercise is to use different case studies based on the experience of the participants. Other variations can include the ways in which you distribute the cases and/or feed them back. You could:

  Change the make-up of the groups after they have looked at one case.

  Ask each group to choose which case they are going to look at.

  Feedback each case to the larger group.

  Ask each group to make notes which will be distributed afterwards.

  Choose cases which are related so that key issues can be fed back from different perspectives, for example:

  Select a number of cases about abuse to look at different aspects of the issue, e.g. sexual abuse, physical abuse, drug abuse, child abuse. Ask for feedback on the role of the group worker in relation to these issues.

Worksheet 4.6 *Case studies in group work*

Group work A. *A leader*

You are a community worker employed to work in an area. In one of the groups you work with, one person is always taking the lead and not allowing the others to fully participate. What should you do? What would you need to consider?

Group work B. *All white group*

You are a member of a tenants' group which has an all white membership. What can you do to increase participation from other people in the community?

What issues do you need to consider?

Group work C. *Cliques*

You are a community worker based in a Centre. Four members of the Community Association attend every event or session held. They gossip between themselves and do not welcome any new people or new ideas. What can you do? What would you need to consider?

Group work D. *Verbals*

A lad of fourteen attends one of the "Youth Club" sessions at a community centre where you are based. Some of the lads have called him a "-----", the current word of abuse for homosexuals. How do you react? What would you take into consideration?

Group work E. *Worrying Mothers*

You are a worker with a young mothers' group. A young woman who wants to join the group came with a Health Visitor for the first time today. She is blind, has not moved from her chair, and the group has made no effort to include her in their talk. You overhear a small group saying that she shouldn't be there because it's dangerous. They are worried that she might hurt herself or the babies by bumping into them or falling. What should you do? What should you consider?

Group work F. *A Static Group*

You have been supporting a Parents of Disabled Children Group for sometime. They have had speakers, short courses, trips and activities. What they really enjoy is a coffee and a chat. You are a paid worker. How will you work with this group? What will you need to consider?

Group work G. *Trips out!*

You work with an Asian Girls' Group which has had the "approval" of the leaders of the local mosque and a high attendance rate. The girls would like to go on trips out and have raised some money through a sale of work produced during the sessions. What issues would you consider in planning the trips?

Group work H. *Neighbours!*

A young girl has told you that her friend is involved with drugs. Both young people come to the youth club. Their parents are close neighbours of yours. What should you do? What would you need to consider?

Group work I *Freeloading!*

You work with a local youth group and hear from a neighbour that some of the young people came back from a trip out with the group with three nearly new bikes. You were not with the youth group on this trip. What do you do?

Group work J *A language issue*

A member of the pensioners' luncheon club is using racist language at the club. He calls some of the white youth names for going around with young black youth and says "We don't want ---- (a term of racist abuse) in here." What do you do?

Group work K. *Cinema trip*

You are taking some youth club members to the cinema. After you are seated, you realise that the members have large supplies of sweets which they did not have earlier. You also know that they did not have any money with them. What do you do?

Group work L. *Bruises?*

You take a young child to the toilet at the Parent and Toddler group. You notice that he has a number of small, red, round sores on his legs - about half an inch wide. They look quite raw and painful. What do you do? What would you need to consider?

Group work M. *Withdrawing*

You work with a neighbourhood centre. Your job description has been changed so that it now involves outreach work. You will no longer be able to maintain your involvement with the groups at the centre.

Your new job description takes effect in three months time. How can you prepare the groups? Which issues do you need to consider?

Group work N. *Coming out!*

A colleague tells you that she is gay and wants to tell the girls in her girls' group. How do you react?

Exercise 4.7 *Group work skills*

Participants spend time in pairs thinking about what they actually do in groups that they work with before a general discussion which relates these activities to a definition of community work and the skills involved.

A list of the key areas in community work appears in **Working Paper 19.**

Aims of the exercise:

- to focus on participants' skills in working with particular groups.
- to emphasise the important role the community worker plays in a group's development.
- to begin discussion on the different skills needed in community work.

Warming up: *What do we do in our groups?*

Alternative warm-ups:

A. Use a general discussion, mime, brainstorm, or "share in pairs" on: What do we *actually do* in the groups we work with? Ask participants to think of practical as well as elusive skills. For example: *making the tea and welcoming new people, as well as supporting applications to courses or jobs and enabling mothers to have time on their own.*

Ask for clarification – especially on over-used terms such as "support" and "enable." What do you *really* mean? What do you actually *do*?

B. Use a mini-presentation to demonstrate the game: *"But what do you actually do?"*

first tutor: *"So what do you do on this learning programme?"*

second tutor: *"I'm one of the tutors"*

first tutor: *"But what do you actually do?"*

second tutor: *"I encourage people to talk about their experience."*

first tutor: *"But what do you actually do?"*

second tutor: *"I divide the group up into smaller groups for different tasks."*

first tutor: *But what do you actually do?"*

second tutor: *"Well, I make them feel welcome and warm them up, and then get them to talk to each other."*

first tutor: *"Okay, so why are you doing all this? "*

second tutor: *"So that people can support and challenge each other and recognise the value of their experience. They need to feel comfortable to do that and they need a structure to do it in."*

first tutor: *"So that's what you do, well, why didn't you say so in the first place?"*

The exercise:

1. Introduce **Worksheet 4.7 *Group work skills*.**

   Put participants into pairs to spend time thinking about what they actually do in their work with at least two groups. Encourage them to choose two different kinds of groups.

2. Feedback: Ask participants to identify which skills they had in common and which were different. Discuss the importance of each.

Flipchart

Group work skills:

3. In discussion, relate the skills to the definition of community work:

   How does this work help a group to share skills and information?

   How does this activity challenge inequalities?

   How do these skills help people to come together?

   How do we learn these skills?

   Can we pass on these skills?

   What training needs do we have in relation to these skills?

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Link with **Exercise 3.8** ***But is this really community work?***

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Community work skills with a group

Participants use the format of the worksheet to present analysis of their work with a particular group.

Worksheet 4.7 *Group work skills*

Fill in this sheet with the name of a group and the skills that you use.

Group:

Skills: What do you do with this group?	Why is this useful or important?

Group:

Skills: What do you do with this group?	Why is this useful or important?

Exercise 4.8 *Group Chance game*

This exercise involves the participants in designing a game based on the factors which affect a group's development. Participants fill in the cards and spaces with examples and decide on the rules for winning. However, designing the game may be more interesting than playing it! Use **Worksheet 4.8** ***Group "Chance" cards.***

Group "Chance" rules

1. Decide on the criteria for winning the game.

   Will the winner be the person or group with:

   the most money?

   the most members?

   the most workers?

   the most members who have moved on?

   the most facilities for the community?

2. Make several copies of **Worksheet 4.8** and fill in the cards as follows:

Facility cards

Put the name of a facility, or draw a picture of a facility, which can be useful for a group on each facility card. For example:

FACILITY

A telephone

FACILITY

A meeting room

Member cards

Use your imagination to illustrate the members of the groups: draw a picture or put the details of the type of person. For example:

ONE MEMBER

An elderly
woman with
typing skills

ONE MEMBER

A young lad with
an interest in
photography

Chance cards

Fill in the cards with events that will mean gaining or losing money, facilities or members. For example:

CHANCE CARD

Grant allowed for new
community centre:
Gain ten members.

CHANCE CARD

Worker gets a new job.
Freeze on.
Lose one worker.

3. Draw a board with a yearly cycle of events and squares where you can draw chance cards.

   Draw a series of squares which follow a "path" in a circle. For example, the board could show an annual cycle so that the sequence of squares could be:

   > *January, Collect Chance Card, Wintertime party, February, March, April, Spring Fair, Annual General Meeting, May, Outdoor Pursuits course, June, July, Summer Playscheme, August, September, Harvest Festival, October, Collect Annual grant, November, Bonfire Night, December, Collect Chance Card.*

4. Invent some rules.

   > For example: *When someone lands on the Spring Fair, everyone has to go there to join in.*

5. Find some dice, some suitable objects for markers and play the game!

Worksheet 4.8 *"Group Chance" cards*

Photocopy, cut out and stick to cards.

FACILITY	ONE MEMBER
ONE MEMBER	ONE MEMBER
CHANCE CARD	CHANCE CARD
CHANCE CARD	CHANCE CARD
TEN POUNDS £10	ONE HUNDRED POUNDS £100

CHAPTER FIVE

DEVELOPING PARTICIPATION IN COMMITTEES

The chapter explores the purpose and functions of a variety of committees – from the very informal to highly structured models. The exercises encourage participants to share their experiences of committees, examine the roles and desirable qualities of officers and members and tackle relevant problems for workers and committee members.

Exercise 5.1 *Why do we have committees?* page 169
Exercise 5.2 *What do committees do?* page 173
Exercise 5.3 *Analysis of a committee* page 176
Exercise 5.4 *Who should be on committees?* page 186
Exercise 5.5 *Officers on the committee* page 189
Exercise 5.6 *Decision-making in committees* page 195
Exercise 5.7 *Blocks to participation* page 198
Exercise 5.8 *Case studies of committee problems* page 200

Keeping a committee alive and responsive to the needs of community groups and interests they represent is not always easy. A regular reassessment of aims and work practice – particularly in terms of the level of participation on the committee – can be a useful method of reminding people why they are members and can assist positive development. The exercises in this chapter have been designed to help this analysis or stock-taking. They should open up discussion on how a committee carries out its responsibilities in the direction of community activities and encourage debate on the value of existing ways of organising. By considering ways to encourage wider participation, the members will be involved in thinking about their role, responsibilities and methodology. As organisations need to adapt and change to avoid fossilising , the exercises should help committee members to find positive ways forward.

What do we mean by committees?

In a community work setting, committees refer to groups of people who have responsibility for organising activities which involve the community. Committees can vary from being:

- a well established **management committee** with a formal constitution and election of members, for example: a Community Association, Council for Voluntary Service, Credit Union.
- a **working group** which meets when the need arises in an informal setting, perhaps in someone's house, for example, a Play committee which discusses play activities for young people in the neighbourhood.
- a **group with a specific brief**, such as a local group which manages resources brought into a neighbourhood as a result of a recent campaign, council or non-statutory initiative.
- a **council-led committee** composed of councillors, officials and community representatives which aim to encourage (or control?) community involvement on particular issues (e.g. estate management committees, area based neighbourhood services committees).

Committees will also vary in responsibilities. One will have a small budget, need to meet only to plan seasonal activities and undertake occasional training. Another will have larger resources to manage, such as buildings, full and part-time staff, volunteers and a regular service to provide. A third committee will meet solely to campaign and to raise awareness around an issue. A Council-led committee may have full consultative powers but limited decision-making powers.

The exercises could be used in the following ways:

- to stimulate thinking about the **direction of particular projects**.
- to **identify problems within committees**, to understand the reasons why they exist and to determine what has to be tackled.
- to provide information (from the tutors' and participants' experience) on which to **make decisions concerning future structures**, e.g. do we really want a formal structure for this committee?
- to encourage a confident approach in **developing new structures** and ways of operating in order to maintain life in a committee and its activities.
- to stimulate thought about the **process or** the means by which the principles of **empowerment** are put into action by committees.
- to build a **Portfolio** of evidence of experience with committees or of work with a particular committee. The worksheets in the exercises could be used to demonstrate understanding and experience in this area.

Planning the sessions:

The exercises can be used in sequence, or with some references to the issues covered in the other exercises, extracted to use on their own.

While the exercises involve looking at committees in general, the tutor should encourage participants to think about a specific committee they work with, serve on or are managed by. In particular, they should reflect on the process by which decisions are made (or not made!) on this committee.

The importance of members keeping track of progress on a committee should be emphasised in the feedback from the exercises. Tutors may wish to direct and assist participants to develop appropriate methods of monitoring and evaluating their work.

Allow time for individuals to talk about the problems or idiosyncrasies of their own committees so that the experience of the group is shared. This approach will have several benefits:

Discussion will remain rooted in practice while dealing with ideals.

Effective working practices can be shared.

Problem areas can be explored collectively.

Prescriptive beliefs can be challenged (e.g. the belief that informal groups are more in touch with local community needs than a formal one may be disproved by the experience of members of the group.)

Participants can come to an understanding of the benefits of regular reviews in increasing effectiveness and involving members in a creative process.

Ideally issues should be picked up as they arise. Facilitators should "interrupt" the exercise to have a discussion about an important or common experience – or note the issue for a later discussion as a **Case Study**. Brainstorming ideas for Case Studies is another way of inviting participants to contribute their ideas on important issues to discuss.

Issues to consider when planning the sessions:

When using the exercises with participants **from one project** or organisation:

> Allow time for full recording on the worksheets in the small groups as they may prove to be useful in planning a way forward for the project.
>
> Think carefully about the groupings: you may need to explore a variety of pairings while thinking carefully about the content of the exercise. Be sensitive to people's needs: for example, putting people from one user group together for some exercises may make sense – while others may work better with the benefit of different perspectives.
>
> Who should be involved? If there are paid workers on a management committee, will they attend as members? Will members intimidate workers and vice versa? If a committee needs to take responsibility for workers, should they meet on their own? Is there adequate representation from the various components of the organisation?
>
> If you are training with a committee comprising newly elected and established members, decide whether to mix experienced members with newer members.
>
> The exercises may need to be adapted to take into account members who come from a background of non-participation. The participants have not been selected to be part of the learning programme and may not see the value of learning from each other.

When using the exercises with people from a **variety of settings**:

> Exploit their experience to the full: make sure that everyone's experience is drawn out and valued.
>
> Pay attention to how participants are grouped. For example, when arranging participants into more than one group think about whether a variety of roles in each group is desirable. Should you mix together workers with others who have management responsibilities? Perhaps you may group volunteers together to share their experience of different organisations?
>
> Use the worksheets to prompt discussion rather than to record everything during the session. Participants can fill in details about their experience at a later time.

Exercise 5.1 *Why do we have committees?*

The exercise begins with a warm-up which assists participants to find the experience they have in common. In the exercise, participants are asked to talk about the committees they are involved with while the tutor elicits the different styles and structures represented. The group moves on to Brainstorm on "Why we have committees" and to examine the varied functions of committees through discussion. The tutor organises, writes up and circulates the notes for use in the next exercise.

Warming-up: *Committees in common*

Ask participants to think about a committee they are involved with. Explain that they could think about any committee: from a formal management committee to a small group which organises a playscheme.

Direct participants to different parts of the room:

- *Everyone over there whose committee meetings are always longer than an hour and a half.*
- *All over here everyone who has to write a report to their committee.*
- *Go to that corner if you have to read other people's reports to the committee.*
- *Move to the right if women always make the tea for the committee.*
- *Go and sit down if your committee is all white.*
- *Jump up and down if your committee has a creche.*
- *Shake everyone's hand if you had more than 20 people at your last Annual General Meeting.*
- *Go to that corner if you have a roving Chair.*

See **Working Paper 15 *Finding things in Common*** for other ideas - especially if any of the participants are not easily mobile.

Aims of the exercise:

- to increase the understanding of committees and their responsibilities.
- to recognise that the different styles and structures of committees have similar functions.
- to use participants experience to define the functions of a healthy and unhealthy committee.

The exercise:

1. Write a basic definition of a committee on a flip-chart and read it out loud.

Flipchart

A committee:

Any group of people which has responsibility for the long-term progress of a project and its resources.

2. Ask participants to talk for a few minutes about the different kinds of committees they work with, e.g. how often they meet, how meetings are run, how the decisions are made. Note examples of different kinds of committees, i.e. different styles and structures, on the flipchart.

   For example, a Joint Consultative Committee, a Community Centre Management Committee, a Parents' Committee (See ***What do we mean by committees?*** *at the beginning of the chapter for some examples.)*

   Make sure that everyone can identify with a committee in their experience. You may need to go around and ask everyone individually.

3. Ask participants to brainstorm on:

Flipchart

Why do we have committees?

4. Discuss the issues raised, e.g.:

   Are all the functions of the committee easily compatible? For example: how do committees support their workers and at the same time ensure that they undertake a managerial role?

How much does this relate to practice in the participants' experience?

For example: Which functions are carried out effectively in the participants' experience? How? Why?

or,

Which functions are not carried out effectively in the participants' experience? Why?

5. After the session, write up the flipcharts so that the committee functions are clearly organised. See **Worksheet 5.1** ***Why do we have committees?*** for an example of how the write-up could be structured.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Move on to discuss constitutions of committees. Bring in some examples and ask participants to bring in their own for comparison.
- Choose a relevant case study for the participants to look at in small groups. This could be either a problem from the group – or one from **Exercise 5.8** ***Case Studies of Committee Problems,*** **e.g. Case Study A:** ***Justify your Case!*** or **Case Study B:** ***Swastikas!***
- Use **Worksheet 5.1** ***Why do we have committees?*** as a basis for discussion of the function and responsibilities of management. Participants could add to the list and share their responses to the ideal in comparison to the reality of their experience.

Worksheet 5.1 *Why do we have committees?*

This list is just a start – make your additions!

FUNCTION:	**RESPONSIBILITY:**
To direct	establish the aims and agree the purpose, policy and strategy of the organisation.
	be accountable to the members and the community and ensure that the constitution and framework of the organisation is respected.
To monitor	review and plan work, make sure that the work is in line with the goals and policies.
To look after resources	get the necessary money, ideas, time and talents as required and if available. Ensure budgeting of funds, encourage new ideas and talents, maintain and insure equipment and buildings, etc.
To be a good employer	maintain good conditions of service and working environment, meet legal obligations.

Exercise 5.2 *What do committees do?*

In the warm-up participants are asked to think about committees and share their thoughts on good committees. The exercise begins with a recap on the general responsibilities of a committee discussed in the previous exercise. The participants then work in pairs or threes on a specific responsibility of committees using their own experience to identify good and bad practice. Feedback from each small group with discussion will allow the whole group to think about the different topics.

The worksheet with this exercise allows each group to look at a specific area of responsibility - but you will need to identify which one *before* you hand them out.

Warming-up: *What good is a committee?*

Ask participants to think about what committees actually *do*. What can a good committee achieve? What good can a committee do? Ask them to share their thoughts in pairs.

Aims of the exercise:

- to increase understanding of what committees do to fulfil their responsibilities.
- to create a checklist of responsibilities which participants can use to analyse their own committees.

The exercise:

1. Go through the brainstorm notes of "Why do we have committees?" to recap on the general categories of responsibilities of a committee: direction, monitoring, resource management, employing agent, support system.

2. Break into pairs or threes and give each working group one of the above categories to work on using **Worksheet 5.2 *What do committees do?***

   (Note: You will need to let the groups know which category they should look at by circling one of the responsibilities listed on the Worksheet.)

   Ask participants to use their experience to record good practice and the problems which committees can face in carrying out responsibilities.

3. Ask each group to feed-back in turn - giving the others the opportunity to feed in their ideas. Record good practice and the dangers in bad practice. Direct participants to think about how bad practice can be changed using the themes as headings on the flipchart.

   Issues to raise in discussion:

   Where do problems most often arise? Why?

   Are these responsibilities usually shared out between members of a project?

Have issues of equal opportunities been considered in the aims of your committee?

How many people are usually aware of the responsibilities?

Who is ultimately responsible for the healthy functioning of this committee?

Flipchart

Committee checklist:

Good practice:	**To avoid pitfalls:**

4. Review the list with the group. Write up the notes from the session in the form of a checklist and circulate for future use, review, or discussion.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Choose a relevant case study for the participants to look at in small groups. Select a problem from the group or one from **Exercise 5.8** ***Case Studies in Committee Problems*****, e.g. Case Study C:** ***Insurance?*** or **Case Study D:** ***Equal Rights!***

- Give out one or all of the questionnaires from the next exercise (**Worksheets 5.3 A, B, C, & D**) which facilitate an analysis of a project's management. These should be filled in after the session to continue reflection on work practice and/or to prepare for the next session.

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Committee responsibilities

Participants sum up the work of a committee they work with and how it fulfils its responsibilities.

Worksheet 5.2
What do committees do?

Select one area of responsibility to look at:

- Resource Management
- Direction and Monitoring
- Employing Agency
- Support system

Make notes under the headings about your experience of this responsibility. What should committees do to ensure good practice in this area? What are the problem areas?

Good practice:

Things to watch out for:

Exercise 5.3 *Analysis of a committee*

Participants interview each other in small groups about a committee they are a member of, or work with, using questionnaires. Feedback is done in a large group with one example used as a basis for discussion.

The questionnaires could also be used outside of a session to identify problems in a particular committee.

Aims of the exercise:

- to think carefully about the way a particular project or committee works.
- to diagnose some possible problem areas.

And, if the participants are from different committees,

- to share experience of different committees in order to see the breadth of methods and structures.

or, if the participants are from the same committee,

- to share perceptions of the method and structure of the committee.

The exercise:

1. *Preparation:* Draw up a questionnaire on the various functions of a committee. **Working Papers 5.3 A–D** are sample questionnaires which could be used – or, you could ask the group to design their own questionnaire based on the previous exercises.

   Worksheet 5.3 A ***Direction and Monitoring***

   Worksheet 5.3 B ***Responsibility for resources***

   Worksheet 5.3 C ***A Management view of Employment Responsibilities***

   Worksheet 5.3 D ***A Worker's view of Employment Responsibilities***

2. Introduce the exercise by describing the questionnaires. Go around the full group to make sure that everyone has a committee or project in mind to use in the analysis.

3. Group the participants into threes or fours and give each group a questionnaire.

4. Ask the groups to look through their worksheet, to think about one committee they would like to analyse in this way, and to take turns "interviewing" each other using the worksheet questions.

You may need to go around to each group, reading through the worksheet and clarifying the points with examples. Challenge participants who say that they have the ideal committee.

Keep your ears open for any interesting examples of committee problems – or unusual ways of working to use later in the exercise.

5. If all the participants are from the same project, arrange a detailed feedback. Otherwise, an evaluation of the exercise may be all that is required, e.g.

   What did you learn from this exercise?

   What major issues arose from this exercise?

   Are there any other questions which should be added to the sheets?

   Did any issues arise which should be discussed by the group?

6. Ask a participant with an interesting committee for permission to use theirs as an example for the group to look at in detail.

   If the committee has a lot of problems, ask participants to suggest ways forward for this group.

   If the committee works in an unusual way, invite participants to discuss the pros and cons of the structure or organisation.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Give out the questionnaires to be filled in *before* the session and organise a feedback as above.
- Participants could be asked to design their own questionnaires about management responsibilities.
- Participants could use the questionnaires while on visits to other projects to report on findings. (See **Exercise 2.13** ***Visits***.)
- Choose a relevant case study for the participants to look at in small groups: either a problem from the group – or one from **Exercise 5.8** ***Case Studies in Committee Problems***, e.g. **Case Study E:** ***Budget Cuts!***

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Analysis of a Committee/Project

Participants fill in all the worksheets about a particular committee or distribute the sheets as a questionnaire to various members of their project to form the basis of a report.

Worksheet 5.3 A *Analysis of a project*

DIRECTION AND MONITORING

A committee establishes the work of a project and makes sure that the work stays in line with its aims – it may also be accountable to a larger group.

Name of project:

My role with the project:

1. Where are the aims of the project recorded and who has access to them?

   Comment on whether they are easily available and easy to understand:

2. How is the work of the project recorded and who sees the records?

   Any comments?

3. Do users of the organisation have any decision-making power?

4. How is the work of the project reviewed?

   Are views about the work aired in discussion?

5. Is everyone involved in making decisions?

How do decisions get made?

6. How is the project in touch with community needs?

7. What links with other projects does it have?

8. Have you been able to contribute your ideas about how the project is run?

Any comments?

9. Is there a management committee which takes on these responsibilities? If not, who does?

10. Comment on whether these arrangements work well:

Worksheet 5.3 B *Analysis of a project*

RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESOURCES

A committee may negotiate and take overall responsibility for funds, grants, premises (including leases, insurance, use of buildings), and equipment. It may also be responsible for the use of all resources; ideas and talents as well as money, and provide an "acceptable face" for funders.

Name of project:
My role with the project:

1. Who knows how your project is funded?

   How do members get that information?

2. How is fund-raising organised? Who fills in grant applications?

3. Who receives the bills and who deals with them?

   Where are the records kept? Are they open?

   How often are they reported on?

4. Who knows what equipment is available? (e.g. typing facilities, meeting rooms, transport, cooking facilities).

   Who looks after it? How do you get access to it?

5. Who knows the skills which different members can contribute to the project?

   Who knows about training opportunities for members?

6. Who is able to use the resources of your project?

   Are certain people excluded or encouraged?

7. Does your project have a management committee which takes on these responsibilities?

8. Comment on whether these arrangements work well:

Worksheet 5.3 C *Analysis of a Project*

A MANAGEMENT VIEW: EMPLOYMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

A committee may carry out the duties of an employer: recruit and select workers (paid and unpaid), provide good conditions of service and a favourable working environment.

Name of project:
My role with the project:

1. How much do you know about the workers' day to day work?

   How did you get this information?

2. Do you have reports from workers about what they do?

   Any comments about these?

3. How much discussion is there about the direction of their work?

   Who ensures that the work is in line with the project's aims?

   Do all proposals for new work get discussed before the work is started?

   Any comments?

4. Are you happy with the workers' approach?

Where and how would you raise any dissatisfaction you may have with the worker's approach?

5. Do you think that the workers are happy in their work?

Where and how could they raise any issues about their conditions of service, training needs or dissatisfaction with the work?

6. What do you think about the working environment?

7. Who drew up and who has seen the workers' conditions of employment, contracts, lists of responsibilities and/or job descriptions?

Who has seen the above?

Any comments?

8. Does your project have a management committee which takes on these responsibilities?

If not, who does?

9. Comment about whether you think that these arrangements work well:

Worksheet 5.3 D *Analysis of a Project*

A WORKER'S VIEW: EMPLOYMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

A committee may carry out the duties of an employer: recruit and select workers (paid and unpaid), look after the conditions of service and the working environment.

Name of project:
My role with the project:

1. How much does anyone else know about your day to day work?

   How do they get this information?

2. Do you write reports about your work?

   Who reads them? Any comments?

3. How much discussion is there about the direction of your work?

   Who ensures that the work is in line with the project's aims?

   Do all proposals for new work get discussed before the work is started?

   Any comments?

4. Is the project happy with your work?

Where and how would the members raise any dissatisfaction about your work?

5. Are you happy in your work?

Where and how could you raise any issues about your conditions of service, training needs or dissatisfaction with the work?

6. What do you think about the working environment?

7. Who drew up your conditions of employment, contract, lists of responsibilities and/or job descriptions?

Who has seen the above?

Any comments?

8. Does your project have a management committee which takes on these responsibilities?

If not, who does?

9. Comment on whether you think that these arrangements work well:

Exercise 5.4 *Who should be on committees?*

The exercise is a directed discussion which uses a brainstorm to encourage thinking about the reasons why specific categories of people should be on committees. The tutor encourages participants to consider how people may help or hinder participation by other members.

Aims of the exercise:

- to determine the specific functions that members of a committee fulfil.
- to examine how members can affect decisions, decision-making, funding, and resources on the committee.

Warming-up: *Useful Committee Members*

Ask participants to think of a committee they work with and to decide who is *the most useful person* on that committee. Go around the participants and list the responses and the role they play on the committee.

> *For example: "Edith is the most useful because she always calms us down and brings us back to the real issues."*

The exercise:

1. Write the following headings on a flipchart – leaving space for a third heading.

Flipchart

Committees:
Who should be on? Why?

2. Ask participants to brainstorm on who should be on committees.

   Make sure that specific groups, particularly oppressed groups, in the community are targeted or represented (e.g. women, black people, disabled people, single-parents, elderly people).

3. Go back through the list to ask why they should be there – what is their function?

Ask specific questions in order to come to a definition the function of each type of committee member. *For example, a local authority representative: why do you need to have representation from the local authority?*

Record on a flipchart under the relevant headings.

4. Go back through the list and ask participants to look at how each type of committee member can help or hinder participation within the committee. Record these under a third heading, **Points to watch**. Encourage comments which are not prescriptive.

For example:

Flipchart

Committees:

Who should be on?	Why?	Points to watch:
local authority representative	condition of funding	officer language and style may inhibit

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Ask participants to fill in **Worksheet 5.4** ***Analysis of committee members*** in pairs, in discussion groups or individually at home.
- Use **Exercise 4.4** ***Group under the microscope*** to examine the obvious and hidden reasons why members are on the committee.
- Change the exercise to discuss the *qualities* of different members and what makes them useful or damaging members of the committee.

Issues to raise:

Do they think that there is a need for different kinds of people on a committee? Why?

Are some people more useful to a committee at particular times?

How do individuals' contributions to a committee get recognition?

How can we build on the strengths of committee members?

Summarise the reasons why having different types of people on a committee may be healthy.

Use one of any number of classifications for analysing the roles of members of groups and committees. For example: Belbin's study of top management teams which describes types of people who contribute to teams working well, e.g. "shaper", "resource investigator", "team worker". (See Handy's **Understanding Organisations** in Appendix F.)

- Choose a relevant case study for the participants to look at in small groups. Use either a problem from the group – or one from **Exercise 5.8 *Case Studies in Committee Problems***, e.g. **Case Study G: *New Blood!*** or **Case Study H: *Professionals on Committees.***

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An analysis of committee membership

Participants include an analysis of their committees in terms of the function different members serve.

Exercise 5.5 *Officers on the Committee*

Participants use worksheets in small groups to prompt discussion of the skills and qualities of officers of committees. The exercise can be a useful introduction to identifying the training needs of committee members in relation to taking on these roles.

Aims of the exercise:

- to analyse the skills and qualities desirable in specific officers of committees.
- to examine the roles of specific officers on committees.
- to think about how the way the roles are performed can effect and affect participation by all members of a committee.

The exercise:

1. Divide the participants into working groups of about three people. Give each working group one of the worksheets which examines a specific officer's role. Make sure that at least one working group is looking at each worksheet.

   Worksheet 5.5 A ***The Chair***

   Worksheet 5.5 B ***The Secretary***

   Worksheet 5.5 C ***The Treasurer***

2. Allow time for discussion and for filling in the sheets.

3. Bring the groups together for a feedback. Ask the group(s) which have worked on **Worksheet 5.5 A** ***The Chair*** to report back on their discussion. Encourage other members of the group to add comments, express views and bring in their own experience.

Flipchart

The role of Chair:

4. Repeat for the roles of Secretary and Treasurer.

Issues to raise in discussion:

How do officers ensure participation by members – both in and outside of meetings? For example, how does a Chair make sure that members can contribute their views?

How can officers initiate new members into the workings of a committee?

How can officers make the first few meetings for a new member less intimidating?

How can jargon be minimised?

How does the style of organising meetings dictate the level of participation?

What are the benefits of different styles of organising committee meetings?

Does everyone have a formal structure to their meetings?

How can problems with unsuitable officers be resolved?

Are there variations in the ways tasks are allocated? Which are more efficient, appropriate or necessary? For example, committees can have:

- a roving chair, a permanent chair – or none at all.
- a secretary with "figure-head" responsibilities , one who simply take the minutes, and/or has to write the letters.
- a sub-group to discuss financial matters, an accountant and auditor, or a treasurer who only banks the money.

Be sure to bring in the experience of participants who belong to informal committees without strict officer roles. This can be like a breath of fresh air to a group with a stifling formal committee.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- If participants are new to committee work, give each working group the opportunity to look at all three worksheets.
- In a course on **Committee Skills**, follow with an exercise to find out the participants' training needs in relation to the skills of an officer:

  Ask each participant to write a note about their needs and put it in a pile. Count up the number of requests for training in each skill's area to determine which to cover.

- *Brainstorm a list of ways in which those skills could be learned or built up.*

- Choose a relevant case study for the participants to look at in small groups. Select a problem from the group or one from **Exercise 5.8** ***Case Studies in Committee Skills***, e.g. **Case Study I:*Racist Language!*** or **Case Study J:** ***Longer and Longer Meetings!.***

- In a course with more experienced workers, follow the exercise with a discussion of:

  How can this information be shared with members of a committee?

  How should committee members be trained in these skills?

  Whose responsibility is the smooth running of a management committee?

  What is the worker's role in relation to a committee which does not reflect the values or aims of the project and/or community work?

Worksheet 5.5 A *The Role of Chair*

1. Why do we need a Chairperson? What should she/he do?

2. What would make someone a good or effective Chairperson?

3. What would make someone an unsuitable Chairperson?

Worksheet 5.5 B *The Role of Secretary*

1. What are minutes for?

2. What should minutes record? Should anything be left out?

3. Why do we have a Secretary? What does a good Secretary do?

4. What would make someone a good Secretary?

5. What would make someone an unsuitable Secretary?

Worksheet 5.5 C *The Role of Treasurer*

1. What are budgets for?

2. What do budgets need to include?

3. Why do we need a Treasurer? What do they have to do?

4. What would make someone a good Treasurer?

5. What would make someone a bad Treasurer?

Exercise 5.6 Decision-making in committees

The tutor introduces several models of management and then directs discussion as to how the models affect decision-making. Participants are encouraged to reflect on how their committees make decisions and whether this is the best model.

Aims of the exercise:

- * to focus on specific of decision-making in committees.
- * to think about how committees may be influenced by a particular model of management.

The exercise:

1. Begin by defining some models of management, for example:

   Formal Hierarchical Collective Unstructured

   Briefly describe each model, asking for an example from the group for each so that participants can relate a specific group to each model represented.

   For example:

   *"A **formal hierarchical model** has a formal constitution which regulates how the committee runs, etc. Is there an example from the group of a committee which is organised in this way?"*

2. Go on to ask for ideas as to how decisions are made in this model and suggestions on when the model can function well.
3. Note the comments on a flipchart and ask the group to identify barriers which would affect how well the model worked.
4. Repeat for the collective and unstructured models.

   For example:

   *An **Unstructured Model** has no obvious management. Workers decide their work programmes after discussions between themselves and perhaps one committee member.*

   The model works well when members are involved in discussion to agree priorities and a programme of work. Works best when the members are involved in the activities with the workers. A healthy group will have genuine participation with lively and challenging debate and discussion with a constructive approach.

The lack of structure can create barriers when members are not involved in the decision-making and the decisions are left in the hands of one person. Members become alienated and leave, become token members and/or develop bad feelings about the workers. Workers will not be accountable and may also feel isolated and unsupported.

3. Discuss how appropriate the different structures are in community work settings. Elicit examples from the group.

Issues to raise:

Do some structures work better with particular kinds of groups?

Which structures take up more time or effort to maintain?

Which rely on a particular personality style in order to work?

Which are more flexible?

Which can you rely on more?

Which promote sharing of skills?

Committees and committee members sometimes have to move from an unstructured model to a more formal one. Ask for examples or use the example of when a local committee is asked to become involved in a council-led forum on decentralisation. Alternatively, discuss how a campaign or steering group may reach a stage where a more formal organisation needs to be set up.

Discuss the influence of groups fighting oppression on the development of non-formal, non hierarchical models, e.g. the women's movement, black people's struggles, and, more recently, campaigns of people with disabilities.

4. Break into pairs. Give each pair a model to discuss in order to agree some practical steps to increase members' participation in decision-making.

5. Feedback ideas to the large group.

Flipchart

To increase participation:

in unstructured model:

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Start the session by giving examples through a "mini-lecture" about your own experience of different models of management, or ask visitors from different structures to describe their committee and how it works. If the learning group is well established, participants could be asked to contribute.

- Choose a relevant case study for the participants to look at in small groups. Select a problem from the group or one from **Exercise 5.8 *Case Studies in Committee Problems***, e.g. **Case Study K. *Not a team worker!*** or **Case Study L. *Collusion!***

Exercise 5.7 *Blocks to participation*

The exercise applies the analysis described in **Exercise 4.5** to the problem of lack of participation by members on committees.

In small groups, participants discuss a problem to do with participation in committees. They identify the blocks and plan how to redress the situation. Feedback would involve problems of representation.

Participants would be expected to have a problem they would like to discuss. If this is not the case, you could use the Case Studies listed under **Additions or variations to the exercise**.

Aims of the exercise:

* to use the reflections participants have made on the structures, responsibilities and decision-making of their committees to develop a plan of action for the future.

* to share an approach to problem analysis as a method to use in the future.

The exercise:

1. Break into fours and ask for a volunteer in each group to present a problem area in members' participation in her committee.

2. Ask each volunteer to briefly state which problems affect members' participation on a specific committee. She should consider what happens both during and outside the meetings.

3. Ask participants in the groups to list the things which get in the way of members participating on the committee and then the factors which may help them to work to a solution.

4. Ask participants to decide on a plan of action which maximises the positive factors and confronts, accepts or reduces the negative ones.

5. Feedback one or two examples to the large group.

Points to raise:

What are the practical ways of challenging members who are not helping participation?

How can agendas and the formats of meetings increase participation?

What situations are appropriate for challenge and which require another approach?

How do you build on members' strengths?

> *For example: by providing encouragement for members who wish to participate more effectively through talking through issues, suggesting likely members to talk with, thinking about opportunities for members furthering their skills and knowledge.*

- How do you avoid "cosiness" on committees or committees which have too much uniformity?
- What steps can be taken to increase opportunities for participation by disabled people, women, working-class people, black people, people who speak other languages?

6. Ask participants who have shared their problem with the group if they will take the plan of action suggested by the group any further.

   Share ideas about how they will monitor and evaluate the success of the plan to increase participation.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- Choose a relevant case study for the participants to look at in small groups. Select a problem from the group - or one from **Exercise 5.8 *Case Studies in Committee Problems***, e.g. **Case Study M.*Where is the meeting?*** or **Case Study N. *Local Representative!***.

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Blocks to participation

Participants complete this analysis with a particular committee with which they are involved.

Exercise 5.8 *Case Studies of Committee Problems*

Participants are split into small groups to discuss relevant problems in committees. A variety of methods for feedback could be used.

The exercise includes some examples of typical problems in committees, but participants may have situations of their own which could be used in discussion. See the **Introduction** for a discussion on the use of case studies.

Aims of the exercise:

- to use case studies of common problems with committees as a basis for sharing experience.
- to develop appropriate responses to problem-solving.

The exercise:

1. Select appropriate case studies for the group.

   Points to consider: Do you need:

   - a selection of case studies to get a range of areas, e.g. membership, officers, direction?
   - studies which will challenge the group or ones which are very familiar? A balance may be appropriate.
   - studies which draw attention to equal opportunity practice, e.g. tackling of racist abuse?
   - studies which prompt discussion of the process by which management reaches a decision?
   - to cover issues which may have arisen in the group?

2. Divide the participants into small groups of three or four. Give each group a case study - either different ones or the same - depending on the time allowed for feedback and which method of feedback being used.

3. Arrange feedback and encourage discussion on varied approaches to the problems. See the notes on ***Feedback*** in the **Introduction**.

4. Arrange for the notes on responses to all the Case Studies to be typed up with the Case Studies and circulated.

Additions or variations to the exercise:

- See **Exercise 4.5 Problem analysis** which could be used in conjunction with this exercise.

Worksheet 5.8 *Case Studies of Committee Issues*

Committee Issues Case Study A *Justify Your Case!*

You are the secretary of the management committee of your organisation. Your major funders have just telephoned you to say that due to their current financial constraints, their grant aid will need to be reviewed. They need a short report justifying your organisation's work by the end of the week.

Discuss: *How do you go about getting this information together?*

Committee Issues Case Study B *Swastikas!*

A young people's group with representation on the management committee of a centre has produced a publicity leaflet for their group which incorporates a swastika. You are a member of the committee.

What do you do? What do you say?

Committee Issues Case Study C *Insurance?*

You are in the office and an insurance company representative calls to discuss renewal of the employer's liability insurance.

What do you do?

Committee Issues Case Study D *Equal Rights!*

You are a member of the management committee. Under "Correspondence", the secretary reads out a letter of complaint from two girls who are members of the youth club. They claim that the boys never let them use the pool table.

The worker at the youth club reports that "I always leave them to it. If girls want to be equal, they have to learn to sort these things out."

What is your response? What are the issues you take into consideration?

Committee Issues Case Study E *Budgeting!*

The Council has allocated Two Hundred Pounds (£200) to your Community Association to be used in the way the Association seems "most appropriate." This is in place of the One Thousand pounds (£1000) your Association originally asked for.

The groups in the Association had put in the following bids:

The Girls' Group want to go on a weekend camp:	£ 100
The Mother and Toddler Group want to run a Play Training course:	£ 160
The Unemployed Group want a computer:	£1000
The Pensioners Writing Group want to print their "Life Stories":	£ 250
The Youth Club want a pool table:	£1000
The After School Club want petrol for a borrowed mini-bus to take the children to the baths for a year:	£ 80
Total:	£2590

You are the Chair of the Community Association and have just heard the news. What do you do?

Committee Issues Case Study F *Workers' Needs!*

You are a full time community worker with a project funded to involve the community in the development of co-operative community businesses. You have been working with the project for twelve months now.

What do you expect from the management committee?

Committee Issues Case Study G New Blood!

The Community Association has had a successful drive to recruit new committee members at the recent AGM. The new members are about to attend their first meeting.

You are the full time worker with the Community Association and you know that three out of the existing six committee members are quite happy as they were and don't really want new members.

What steps do you take to encourage the new members and work with the old?

Committee Issues Case Study H

"Professionals on Committees"

You have been invited to join a district wide committee looking at "Under-Fives : provision and needs" because of your experience in Parent and Toddler groups and playschemes for Under-Fives. You attend your first meeting and come back feeling totally frustrated and angry. You're incensed by the "professionals" attitudes to people in the community - and by their lack of awareness of needs and good provision. You're frustrated because you couldn't say what you wanted to.

Develop a plan of action for your next meeting.

Committee Issues Case Study I *Racist language!*

You are a member of a formal co-ordinating committee for a local community centre. During the meeting, the Chair introduces an item on repair work necessary due to vandalism by saying:

"Well here we go again, I don't know what else we can expect in an area like this full of **** (a derogatory term for black people)."

How do you respond? Do you take any issues into consideration? What else do you plan?

Committee Issues Case Study J

Longer and longer meetings!

You are a member of a committee which meets quarterly to review the work of the project. You joined the committee because you are very concerned about the way the project is run, but feel that you never get to grips with any of the issues in the meetings.

The agenda always looks reasonable, but matters arising from the workers' reports always need discussion. By the end of the agenda, lots of issues have been covered, but you still feel that there are others which you wanted to discuss. Because everyone is tired and wants to go home, you wouldn't feel comfortable raising them under "Any Other Business."

What should happen to this committee? What can you do about it?

Committee Issues Case Study K

Not a Team Worker!

You are part of the management committee of a Women's Refuge. One of the workers is no longer working with the rest of the team. She is only at the Refuge for a few hours each day, avoids taking on any work (e.g. liaison with housing or solicitors) and says that she spends a lot of time on after care. The women who have left the Refuge say she hasn't been to see them.

The other workers and some members of the support group are aware that this is going on. They come to you for advice. *What do you advise them to do?*

Committee Issues Case Study L *Collusion!*

You are a member of a committee of 12 people – nine women and three men. The Committee meets on the first Monday of each month at 7.00 pm. For a few months now, unknown to one committee member (who we shall call "A"), a pre-meeting has been held leading up to 7.00 pm.

"A" has just found out what has been going on – and has confronted the committee with it. "A" says that collusion amongst the members has led to deliberate and systematic exclusion from the pre-meetings – which "A" considers to be racist.

How do you assess the situation?

What is your response? What are your recommendations for the future?

Thanks to John Best for this case study.

Committee Issues Case Study M

"Where is the meeting?"

You have been invited to attend a very formal committee meeting for the local Community Association as a co-opted member because of your expertise in budgets and accounts. You are very interested in this Association because their activities seem interesting and they have a number of paid staff who potentially could make a lot of changes to facilities and opportunities available in the community. You use a wheelchair.

You have lost the letter telling you where the meeting is being held and you have never attended one of their meetings before. *What will you ask them?*

Committee Issues Case Study N

"Local representative"

You are elected to the Neighbourhood Forum to fill one of the three community representatives' posts. You are meeting with the other two community representatives before the first meeting to discuss a common strategy to make sure that community's interests are highlighted.

What sorts of issues will you need to think about?

How will you keep in touch with the people who elected you?

Committee Issues Case Study O Unhappy worker!

You are employed as a community worker with a Community Association. You are feeling very frustrated because you feel that your work is not recognised or appreciated by the management committee. They don't say much, but they look full of regret when you tell them about your work at the meetings.

You have been doing lots of new work with the young people outside the centre and in the community – but all the management committee seems to want is for you to stay in and run the Centre.

Although most of the management committee live in the area, you feel that they are out of touch with local needs.

What can you do to improve the situation? What issues would you need to consider?

CHAPTER SIX

KEEPING TRACK OF PARTICIPATIVE LEARNING

Monitoring and evaluating a participative learning programme requires a variety of methods of "keeping track" of relevance, progress and levels of participation within the group. This chapter outlines a number of practical ways to ensure that the aims of participative learning and your particular programme are being met.

A. METHODS OF KEEPING TRACK page 211
B. KEEPING TRACK OF THE INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS page 213
C. KEEPING TRACK OF THE GROUP page 217
D. THE TUTORS' PERSPECTIVES page 220

Evaluation is central to the process of participative learning. Monitoring progress and responding appropriately is a method of ensuring that a programme remains relevant to participants. Getting feedback on the structure, content, methods and learning environment means that organisers and tutors form an idea of the overall effectiveness of the programme and are able to resolve any issues or problems which arise. Discussion with participants about how the group is developing provides opportunities for thinking about the process of learning and the role that participants and tutors play. Participants' self-evaluation raises awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses to facilitate relevant participation. In addition, keeping track of whether participants' experience is being used and valued assists tutors to develop their own awareness and judgment.

Key issues concern the methods, the criteria and the response from the programme which should be in keeping with the principles of participative learning and based on an understanding of the issues and practice of the field. Throughout the programme the information and views which are gathered need to be responded to appropriately. Evaluation can involve past, present and potential participants, as well as tutors and programme organisers to keep the evaluation relevant and meaningful.

This chapter suggests some methods of keeping track of participative learning: specifically looking at how tutors can keep track of individual and group needs and development. We wish to emphasise that tutors should share their findings with participants and members of the organising bodies. Some suggestions on the setting up of an organising committee are put forward in **Chapter One:** ***Nuts and Bolts***.

Programme organisers will need to keep track of progress during a programme in order to ensure that aims are being met and at the end to decide what to repeat and what needs to be changed. Committee meetings should include reports of the monitoring and evaluation methods used on the programme from both the tutors' and participants' perspectives.

The organisers can contribute and develop their perspective from the reports and discussion at committee meetings. They may also visit sessions, have casual interviews with participants in the normal course of work, or hold "consultancy" sessions with tutors. A checklist which the organisers can use in analysing the programme can be found in **Working Paper 28.**

The findings of the exercises described in this chapter may also be used to maintain the interest of sponsoring bodies, employers, potential participants and other groups.

A. METHODS OF KEEPING TRACK OF A PARTICIPATIVE PROGRAMME

Useful methods of keeping track of participation and the progress of a group can be formal or informal, controlled or free ranging, and involve everyone or just a few. Ideally, the more informal methods of keeping track of participants will be seen as common sense and good practice in any learning programme. Tutors in a participative programme should particularly value their casual contact with participants where progress can be noted.

For example, casual conversation with participants can be used in a variety of ways:

- to monitor the participants' view of the programme content or direction, their own development and the development of the group.
- to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme by discussing the issues raised in sessions and finding out about their understanding and use of the material outside of the sessions.
- to discuss plans for future sessions together, get feedback on proposals and enlist support for ideas.

More formal methods can be useful in providing written records to aid review or anonymity to help honest appraisals. Some methods will involve exercises with several stages so that a perspective can be developed. For example, setting guidelines for a group in the beginning of a programme provides a basis for review of expectations and whether they were fulfilled both during and after the programme.

Evaluation at the end of a programme will assess whether the aims have been reached, find explanations for any problems and record what actually happened in a programme. An evaluation may also determine how successful a programme is and whether resources are being used effectively. Decisions about criteria used to judge effectiveness will also to be looked at by the programme organisers in terms of participation, equal opportunities issues, the aims of the programme and their own experience.

With any luck, the end of the programme will be viewed as a beginning. Future programmes will be based on the findings of the evaluation and participants' plans will be based on an assessment of their progress on the programme and how they finally see themselves. Rather than imagining people who come out of a programme as packets coming off a production line, we need to recognise the development of individuals. Learning will continue and support and encouragement will still be needed. The evaluations help to determine what those future requirements will be.

Some "guidelines" for methods of evaluations are: to be open, democratic and participative.

- Know why you are involved in the analysis: will the results be used for anything other than planning for the future? Who "owns" the findings?

  For example: written or verbal reports may be necessary for a course *committee, Board of Studies, or sponsoring body. The audience for the findings will determine the methods and questions asked as well as how they are presented. Who decides these issues?*

- * Involve participants in the evaluation.
- * Let participants know what is going to happen with the results – and what the results are.

Keeping track of participants will reveal relevant issues at work as well as feelings about the programme. On finding a burning issue, pick it up. Don't wait until a formal evaluation or relevant session to discuss real life concerns. If necessary, timetable a response at the beginning or end of the next session. Some issues may seem to be red herrings, but with probing, tutors will often find that the issue can be relevant to many of those in the group.

> For example, *a participant may be experiencing difficulties at work – her attendance at the programme may be causing added stress: Why am I not in work sorting these problems out? A group discussion about the importance of support from employers and colleagues could arm her with arguments when she returns to work. The points will serve as a useful reminder to the rest of the group as well as help her to resolve her confusion.*

Other issues may be able to be related to the content of the programme and addressed through case study discussions. (See the **Introduction** entry under **Case studies** and **Exercises 5.8 and 4.6**.)

> For example, *a participant experiencing racist abuse at work could present the situation to the group. When the group discusses the issue, they could suggest alternative strategies.*

Findings from individual exercises should usually be fed into the larger group – either by raising the issues with the group or by asking the individuals to contribute their findings to the group. For example, an exercise could begin with asking individuals what their feelings are about a programme and their progress and ask them to discuss their thoughts in pairs, then groups of four and then the full group. Written exercises could be completed in pairs or small groups – or discussed in those groups before being completed individually.

Feeding back findings to the programme's organising committee should be encouraged. Participants should be able to discuss their views with their representatives and be supported to attend themselves.

B. KEEPING TRACK OF THE INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS

Finding out about the impressions, responses, understanding, plans or analyses of individual participants is an important way to keep track of whether a programme is meeting their needs. The individual perspective will be sought out so that:

- participants see that the tutor(s) and organisers are taking an interest their perspective and experience.
- issues which arise can be dealt with "on the spot" or appropriate action planned.
- support for or contributions to particular future sessions or exercises can be elicited.
- individuals have the opportunity to speak privately and confidentially.

Casual conversation

Conversation with individual participants can be a very informal method of keeping track of individuals. Make time available, even if only for fifteen minutes after the session when participants can "chat" generally with tutors. The tutors' accessibility and approachability will help participants to raise concerns and to give or receive a pat on the back which will keep up morale! Ask general questions to elicit views or feelings about the overall direction and content of the programme, a particular session, or plans for the future. For example, talking informally with participants while washing the cups can help tutors to keep in touch. Asking questions such as:

> *"Are you settling in all right? Any problems?" or "How do you think the session went last week / this week?" or "How are you feeling about the group / programme / exercises?" "Do you think that the group is providing enough support or challenge?"* could raise worries to be discussed immediately, but may also benefit discussion with the full group.
>
> *"Do you think a session on committees, a cups washing rota, an emergency programme committee meeting, a particular warm-up exercise is a good idea?"* will show that the participant's views are valued - and could enlist support for a possible course of action - or help to decide against it.
>
> *"How are things at work?" "Have you been able to sort out that committee yet?"* will help tutors to keep in touch with the important issues being dealt with in participants' everyday work. Using counselling techniques, sharing experience, or suggesting contacts and solutions, may be appropriate. The issues could also be discussed with the group to maintain the programme's relevance.

Some of the issues arising from individual consultation will be crucial. A participant may have worries or difficulties and be considering dropping out. The tutor may need to talk with an individual about the effect they are having on the rest of the group.

For example, approaching a participant who is taking a back seat in discussion could reveal that she is simply taking time to settle into the group and is developing the confidence to speak. Alternatively, she may feel that her experience is not being valued by the group or is irrelevant to the exercises being used. Showing an interest could encourage her to speak out. Careful planning will ensure that future sessions address her experience more directly and that her views are sought out.

Self-selection

Deciding whether or not she is ready to come on a particular learning programme is a form of self-evaluation. The significance of the publicity and other methods of finding out about a programme in terms of assessment should not be underestimated. Applicants will assess the relevance and appropriateness of a course before they begin - and will be interested in the structure, content and methodology in order to decide whether the programme seems appropriate to their needs. See **Chapter One *Nuts and Bolts*** which has a section about publicity.

Methods of monitoring the effectiveness of the self-selection will include noting the number of appropriate applicants, discussing the publicity with past and potential applicants, and finding out what forms of support or encouragement people need at this stage.

Interviews

Careful questioning at interviews will help the planning of a programme based on what applicants say they need or want from a programme. The benefit of this approach is that the programme is likely to be or be seen as more relevant.

More formal assessment of what participants expect from a programme could involve consultation with the individuals or the group. For example, "tailor-made" training for a group or committee which is experiencing difficulties in team building or decision making would usually require some discussion and analysis of the situation before the programme begins.

Hopes and Fears

Exercise 2.13 *Hopes and Fears* can be used to assess expectations about the programme. If the participants are asked in the first session what they hope to gain from the programme and what they are worried about, a record of their hopes and fears can be kept. The list can be distributed and discussed at the next session as well as used in evaluation at a later stage to see whether those hopes or fears have been realised.

Individual expectations questionnaire

Asking individuals to fill in a questionnaire about their expectations of a programme allows them to plan their own agenda and can help the tutor to plan future sessions. See **Working Paper 20 *My expectations from the programme***. Reviewing the questionnaires helps tutors and participants to keep track of whether expectations have been met - and to what extent.

Suggestions or complaints box

Keep a box for suggestions or complaints near the tea trolley with a pencil and pad of paper attached. The "method" allows participants to feed in information without revealing themselves. A variety of responses could be appropriate e.g. bringing the issues to the attention of the group or course committee, taking immediate action (particularly on a practical issue), or regularly reading the contents out during sessions in order to provoke a group response.

Session notes

After brainstorming sessions, circulate the notes and ask the participants to add their comments or additional points at home. A "diary" of their reactions to a programme may be kept in this way. The diary may also be used in assessment of the impact of the programme on the participants. An accompanying questionnaire could be filled in about the session notes. For example:

> *What was the most important issue raised in this session? What could you use from this session in your work? Highlight the points which you feel need to be followed up.*

Portfolios

FOR
YOUR
PORTFOLIO

Portfolios can be comprehensive summaries of participants' experience and understanding which will be concrete evidence of their learning. Participants could include an analysis of their development on the learning programme.

Evaluation sheets

Reflection on experience and "taking stock" can be facilitated by evaluation sheets. Individual records of responses to programmes can be useful in planning future programmes, providing written material for programme reports and for focusing attention on particular aspects or sections of a programme. An example is in **Working Paper 21**.

Self evaluation

The methods of keeping track of learning involve self-evaluation - they will all require participants to evaluate the relevance of the programme to their own learning. An exercise or session labelled "self-evaluation" could focus this analysis. Ask the participants to think about how the programme changes the way they work, their views and their confidence. Thinking about where they still need development would include an assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. See **Working Paper 22** for a sample self-evaluation form.

Planning future learning

Participants should look at where they are going during the programme and afterwards. By setting their own goals for learning, they take some responsibility. **Working Paper 23** is an example of a worksheet which could be used.

Interest in continued development after a programme can be a measure of the success of a learning programme. A method to help look at the steps needed to achieve a goal is included in **Working Paper 24**.

Using participants to resource future programmes

Participants could be used as resources for future programmes. Finding out whether they feel ready to take on the task will be a measure of their confidence. At the end of a programme, ask participants about what they feel ready to offer any new programme. Contacting ex-participants may be more successful as time may be required for some of the learning to sink in. Once participants have applied their learning to their work without the regular support of the learning programme, they will be more confident. Past participants can be excellent resource people, facilitators or tutors for new programmes as they will have experienced the participative approach to learning and facilitating sessions, and will represent a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. A break between being a participant and being an outside resource may be a good idea to reduce excessive loyalty to a previous group's way of working.

The record sheet in **Working Paper 26** can be used to collect information for a file of what people have to offer, e.g. being a resource person, tutor, facilitator, consultant. Explain that future participants will be encouraged to visit them to see and hear about other approaches. Assisting a group to prepare for a session or supplying information and contacts on particular areas of work are other ways in which their expertise can be used.

Participants who come onto a new programme as an "outsider" will need support to fit in with the needs of the current participants. Time for preparation and discussion with tutors or people resourcing the sessions will need to be allocated or they could feel thrown in at the deep end. Their learning will continue and support and encouragement will still be needed – particularly as the group will be a new one – and the confidence they developed within their own group may need time to be transferred.

C. KEEPING TRACK OF THE GROUP

A useful starting point for a group exercise in monitoring or evaluating progress could be the information on various issues raised in the individual methods outlined above. The group exercise adds considerably to the analysis. By responding to discussion with others or abiding by decisions made by the group, participants will be helped to:

* take responsibility for responding to the issues which arise - through challenge or support.
* foster a democratic process which should increase involvement, understanding and co-operation.
* provide an opportunity for participants to influence each other.
* cheer everyone up about how far they have come.
* maintain a commitment to the programme as they will have a stake in its progress.

Keep the exercises positive. If gaps in the programme are revealed, discuss how they can be filled.

Group discussion

A small group discussion on how people feel about the programme - and whether they feel able to contribute is an effective way of monitoring both the development of the group and participants' feelings about the content and direction of the programme. Record the key issues and review with the larger group.

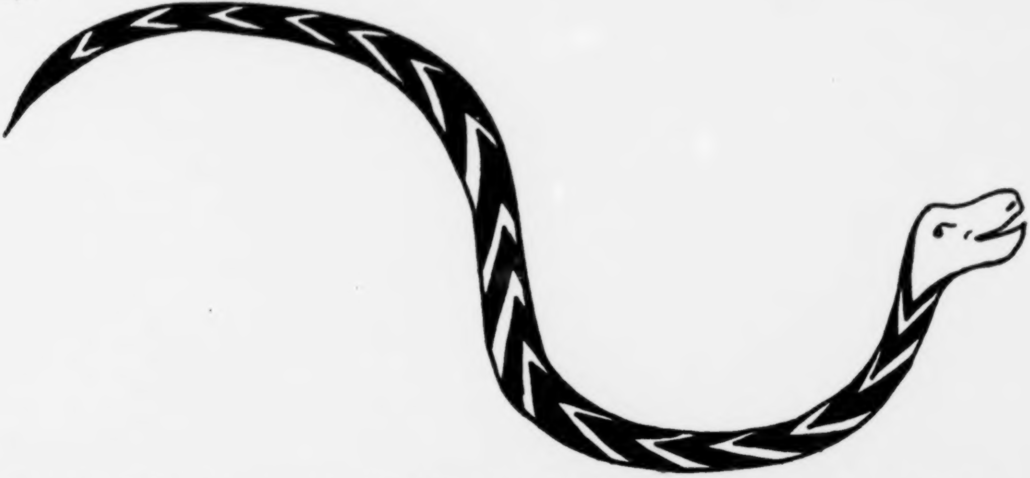
Asking questions such as:

> *"What was the best thing about this session / the weekend / the programme so far?"* leads to a discussion which values the contribution of different members of the group.
>
> *"Has this session been useful?"* will offer the group positive ways forward for using the material covered in the session in their work.
>
> *"Are there any issues which came up today which need more attention?"* allows issues to be tackled immediately - or included in the next session.

Our own group snake!

An adaptation of **Exercise 4.3** which charts the ups and downs in a group's life can be used either as a warming-up exercise before a discussion of progress in the group - or to help set guidelines for the future.

Draw a large chart on the wall with a wavy line to illustrate the ups and downs in the group.



Participants fill in the diagram with the factors which make the learning group work well and issues which are causing problems. The tutors may also contribute their views.

Or, use a flipchart:

Flipchart

How our group is developing:

What works against us:	What helps the group:

Follow-up with a discussion of the issues raised.

Identifying support from within the group

Many of the exercises in **Chapter Two *Getting to Know Each Other*** can be used to assess the extent to which sharing and support is taking place.

For example, **Exercise 2.7 *Range of experience*** can be used to see whether the experience available in the group has been used in sessions. Ask the group to identify the "gaps" – where the notes from the exercise are reviewed in terms of the work covered to date. By listing the experience that they would like to hear more about, the group can plan further sessions, or think about networking outside the sessions through visits or consultancies with the relevant participant.

Exercise 2.8 *Strengths and Weaknesses* can be used to check that members are able to be open about their weaknesses and if the group can identify support from within.

Setting and reviewing ***Guidelines for the group*** (**Exercise 2.15**) is a particularly useful way of monitoring the group's progress. Reviewing them at the end of the programme is also useful.

Reviewing the aims of the programme

The group may benefit from looking at the aims of the programme at certain stages of the learning programme to assess whether they are being met. For example the aims could be divided up into various headings on flipcharts put up on the wall – with two columns where participants are invited to note down the different ways in which they can be achieved. Alternatively, a discussion may be facilitated around this issue and used to plan future sessions.

At the end of a programme, the group should look at the aims and discuss which were the most important for them, which were reached and which were not.

An Open Day

Arranging an Open Day to display the work of the participants is a very successful way to end a programme. People invited to attend may include employers, colleagues, potential applicants for future programmes and funding bodies. The session can be an opportunity for participants to discuss their experience on the programme. The level of confidence displayed by the participants in presenting their materials and the work of the group to everyone can be very impressive. Ensure that the participants take a full and active role in welcoming everyone and particularly that they reassure potential applicants.

D. THE TUTORS' PERSPECTIVES

During the early stages of a programme, the tutors will be involved in ensuring that monitoring and evaluation is carried out – and so will be particularly aware of what is going on with regard to the group, individuals and content of the programme. As participation increases, so should the group's role in carrying out these functions. However, the tutors will need to be involved in keeping track of progress in the group throughout the programme.

The tutors' perspective is valuable in terms of what can be expected from a group. Previous experience will have given them ideas about what can be achieved. Comparisons may reveal that a group is not performing well: that challenges are not forthcoming, ideas or analysis are simplistic or experience is not being used sufficiently.

Tutors are encouraged to develop methods of evaluating progress. A few tried and tested methods are listed below.

Tutors' checklist

Monitoring by tutors takes place during sessions all the time. Experienced tutors will have a "mental checklist" constantly running during the sessions and while planning groupings and exercises. Responding to the situation immediately is important. Raising the issues with the group in order to involve them in the process of the development of the group and the direction of the sessions may also be worthwhile.

A checklist may include:

Attendance: Has everyone turned up? If not, Do I know why? Could someone from the group follow this up – or should I give them a ring?

Participation: Is everyone joining in? Who else could contribute their experience to this issue? Will I ask the group? Is anyone taking a back-seat? Should I talk with them at the break – or challenge them in the session?

Body language: Does anyone look worried or bored? Shall I ask them if they're okay – or will I ask someone else to speak with them?

Content: Has this session dealt with the important issues on this subject? Are challenges, analysis and ways forward being provided here? Does anyone else have a different slant to add? Will these issues come up in a future session or should I introduce them here? Checking through the session notes on the flip-charts should be a regular routine.

Action lists

Keeping an action list on a wall chart, the edges of the pages of a diary or other frequently consulted place will help tutors' to keep on top of the many tasks involved in holding a group together and ensuring adequate communication. A planning chart and a rota of tasks will also help co-tutors or tutors and participants to keep track of the work to be completed.

Tutor discussion

Evaluation and monitoring discussions between co-tutors outside of the sessions will help to keep track of participants and any problems in the group. A method to keep track of individual participants is simply to go through the list or register to check attendance and discuss their level of participation in the sessions. By sharing information and ideas about what may be affecting an individual's lack of contribution, problems can be identified and ways forward discussed. Half an hour regularly given to this exercise will help to identify a number of problems before they get out of hand. Records of these discussions - or notes of issues raised may be useful if participants will need references for work or further education.

Tutors can look at the programme in terms of who is benefiting most in order to think about whether the aims are being reached with specific participants and how the learning group is progressing.

Other criteria may include:

Aim:	**Evidence of progress:**
increased self-confidence	how individuals talk about their work, contribute to the group, write about themselves in their portfolios, apply for jobs or further training, use the experience they have gained in their work and challenge others in work or in family life.
development of training skills	how individuals plan and facilitate sessions, whether they go on to facilitate or tutor on other programmes or use facilitating skills in their work.
increased awareness of skills	a positive analysis of experience in portfolios, applications for jobs, development of new areas of work, a more confident approach to work and colleagues.
commitment to the group	through attendance records, noting the level of participation in sessions and whether they continue to be committed to the programme: joining the programme committee, acting as a resource for future programmes, interviewing or welcoming new applicants, and recommending the programme to others.

At the end of the programme, tutors can examine the programme in more general ways, by:

- analysing feedback from all the evaluations.
- looking at the participation in an Open Day as an indicator of interest from past, present and future participants and their employers.
- interviewing employers of participants about their perceptions of the impact of the programme.
- thinking about the status of the programme in the eyes of the sponsoring body, employers and academic institutions. What happens to past participants? Is the programme recognised as being valid and beneficial?

Consultation

Bouncing ideas and discussion of progress between a tutor and programme committee member, colleague or other supporter can help a tutor to keep track of what is going on in a group. Using a consultant may be particularly important if a tutor is working on her own with a group. Going through practical arrangements, content of sessions and the development of members and the group with someone else can assist clarification of thinking and development of appropriate strategies.

More formal methods

- keeping a **register of attendance** – or **signing-in sheet** to keep records of who attends.
- going through the **"diaries"** or notes from sessions with the participants to check that they understand the issues and are interested.
- setting **assessed pieces of work** where participants are asked to apply a method or approach to an issue covered in a session individually or outside of the session to check their understanding and ability to work outside the group. **"Homework"** can be a measure of commitment, relevance and usefulness.
- writing a **report of the programme** to concentrate thoughts and analysis of what went on. Ask for participants' contributions and circulate a draft copy for their comments and additions.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Methods of evaluation can be used to build and maintain a participative approach to learning and to assist the participants' development of critical awareness. Keeping track of a programme should be seen as a means of enabling the process rather than simply a test to see whether it worked. Perhaps a simple way of viewing the process is to imagine a continuous line of communication between all the people involved in the programme in order to make sure that the programme keeps on track. The exercises should help to stimulate participants to take responsibility for their own learning by setting their own goals, planning their own programmes and carrying out their own assessments of whether they have worked.

We hope that readers will develop their own monitoring and evaluation methods and criteria and find the task as worthwhile as we have. If the findings from your evaluations are interesting, please send them on to us!

APPENDIX A

NUTS AND BOLTS WORKING PAPERS

The ***Nuts and Bolts Working Papers*** include material to use in making practical arrangements for a learning programme. They consist of record sheets and material to use in short-listing and interviewing participants and checklists for assessing whether venues are appropriate.

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

Selection of applicants

Nuts and Bolts Working Papers 1 - 6 are based on selection of participants in a long term programme for experienced community workers and activists. They are samples which could be adapted for use in other types of programmes. The material is related, for example: the selection criteria (Working Paper 1) are referred to in the aims of the questions (Working Paper 4).

Working Paper 1	*Selection criteria* page 227	The criteria assist analysis of experience in order to select a learning group which can work participatively.
Working Paper 2	*Application form* page 229	The application form looks for the basic information required to select for interview.
Working Paper 3	*Interview introductions* page 232	Each applicant should be given the same information - and an opportunity to settle in to the room.
Working Paper 4	*Aims for interview questions* page 233	The questions being asked during the interview are related to the selection criteria.
Working Paper 5	*Interview record sheet* page 234	The interview questions are on a record sheet so that notes from the interviews can be made during the interview. A copy is required for each interviewer to record their notes on an applicant.
Working Paper 6	*Interview summary sheet* page 240	The summary sheet should be filled in by the interviewers directly after the interview to record the applicant's responses in relation to the selection criteria.

Organising venues

Nuts and Bolts Working Papers 7 – 10 are useful checklists to use when making arrangements for room bookings and residentials. Keep the information on file with the date so that you have a record of what venues can provide.

Working Paper 7	*Access information* page 241	The list of requirements will assist in selecting premises physically accessible and conveniently located for participants with disabilities.
Working Paper 8	*Checklist for residential arrangements* page 243	The Venue checklist is useful when making arrangements for room bookings and residentials.
Working Paper 9	*Residential evaluation sheet* page 245	The evaluation sheet for residential premises is to be filled in by participants following a residential and can be forwarded to the organisers for feedback.
Working Paper 10	*Residential planning sheet* page 246	Participants detail their dietary, childcare and room requirements on this sheet to facilitate booking arrangements.

Working Paper 1. *Selection Criteria*

Selection criteria for a long term participative programme for experienced community workers and activists.

1. Applicants are selected on the basis of **essential criteria** which concern the experience an individual has to offer the group. Applicants should have:

   A. at least five years part-time (three days a week) or three years full time **experience in community work** as an activist or worker with either a range of experience with different community groups or more intensive (e.g. founder member) work with a particular group.

   B. **an understanding of community work with groups** demonstrated through examples of good and/or bad practice, the beginning of an overview of how groups develop and a feeling for their ups and downs. Applicants should also be able to indicate that they are ready for some analysis of their role or a serious look at the way they have been working.

   C. **relevant life experience**: experience of challenging oppression or the attitudes which come from it as a black person, a woman, a disabled person (or someone with close experience of disability), and/or a working-class person. The experience should have given them examples of the effects of that oppression and of how they have tackled or challenged them.

   D. **evidence of sharing and/or desire to share** these experiences and the skills, knowledge, awareness and understanding they have learned from them. This may include examples of other people they work with who have learned from them, an eagerness to learn from the others on the programme and/or clear ideas about how they could use their experience in the group.

   E. **current and on-going community work with groups** for at least three days a week.

2. Once a list of applicants who have fulfilled the essential criteria has been made, selection will be based on the following **desirable criteria**. Preference would be given to evidence that:

   A. an applicant had been on some form of **previous training** in community work skills such as that provided by the local authority or regional Community Work Training Group. Relevant courses could include: Initial Training in Youth and Community Work, Play training, courses in counselling skills, information sessions on housing issues or welfare rights, workshops on challenging racism. Most applicants would be expected to have taken up some form of initial training and good reason would need to be shown if the applicant had not.

   B. an applicant has **not received a higher education qualification**. Applicants with a CQSW or Certificate in Youth and Community Work would not be considered.

3. Final selection will be based on **creating a balanced group** which has a range of experience and can learn from each other. The learning group should include:

   A. people **from different cultures and with different life experiences** – particularly from oppressed groups, e.g. women, black people, working class people and disabled people.

   B. people who have **worked with different types of groups or groups with different characteristics**, e.g. different users, settings, funding arrangements, management structures.

   C. people who have **experienced different working roles** with groups, e.g. as member, activist, paid worker, unpaid worker, committee member, officer of a committee.

   D. people who have different **styles of work**, e.g. challenging, supportive.

Working Paper 2. Application form

Name:

Address:

Daytime telephone:

Evening telephone:

1) **Present community work activity:**
(What are you doing? Where/What Group? For how long?)

2) **Why do you want to participate in this programme?**
(Tell us what you hope to learn or gain from participation.)

3) **Describe any experiences or strengths which you can bring to the group:** your past experience as a volunteer, activist, or paid worker, the types of groups you have worked with, the activities you were involved in, and any personal experiences which you feel are relevant.

(What have you done? Where? For how long?)

4) **Have you any experience of sharing your skills, knowledge, awareness?** (Give some examples of how you did this.)

5) **Tell us about any previous training you have experienced.**
(Include any courses, training or induction sessions, formal or informal, which you have been on – and what you thought of them.)

Interviews: Please tick the following dates when you are available.

[ ] [ ]

[ ] [ ]

[ ] [ ]

Signed:

Date:

This form should be returned to:

By:

If you want any help with filling in this form, or have any questions, please contact:

If you wish to add anything else, please feel free to do so.

Working Paper 3.
Interview introductions

Introductions to applicants:

A. *(Introduce the members of the panel: your names and "roles".)*

B. This interview should only take about 30 minutes.

C. *(Let them know whether smoking is acceptable.)*

D. Please feel free to ask any questions at any stage.

E. We are holding these interviews with ______ *(number being interviewed)* people and hope to shortlist to _____ *(number on the course)* on ______*(date)*. We are aiming to select a group of participants who will be able to learn from each other by sharing their experience. You need to make sure that we get as full a picture of your experience as possible.

F. We will need to make notes – we do this with everyone and hope that it won't put you off too much – and we will be taking turns asking questions.

G. We will summarise what you have told us in answer to each question. You should have time to add any additional experience or information. Please check that we have summarised each answer correctly so that we get a full picture of your experience.

H. Do you have an Information Sheet? This tells you how to contact us if necessary – and has some useful information including the dates of sessions and childcare arrangements.

Working Paper 4.

Aims of the questions

Interview questions	How they relate to the criteria
	(See Working Paper 1)
Question 1. To establish the range and length of the applicant's experience in order to satisfy the minimum criteria and ensure a range of experience in the group.	**1 A.** experience in community work **1 E.** current community work **3 B.** different types of groups **3 C.** different working roles **3 D.** different styles of work
Question 2. To establish the applicant's motives for coming on the programme, that they have reasonable expectations, and that the programme is the best option for them.	**1 B.** understanding of group work **1 D.** sharing skills, experience **3 D.** different styles of work
Question 3. To establish the applicant's depth of experience and readiness for a sharing approach.	**1 B.** understanding of group work **1 C.** relevant life experience **1 D.** sharing skills, experience **3 A.** different cultures, backgrounds
Question 4. To establish the applicant's interests and to use them in planning the programme.	**1 B.** understanding of group work **1 C.** relevant life experience **3 D.** different styles of work
Question 5. To establish the applicant's previous training experience and understanding of the participative approach.	**1 D.** sharing skills, experience **2 A.** previous training **2 B.** no higher education qualification

Working Paper 5.
Interview Record Sheet

Applicant's name: Interviewers' names:

Date and time of interview:

QUESTION 1. ***Range and length of experience***

1. Could you start by telling us about the work you are involved with at present. *(Make sure that you extract the length of involvement, e.g. two nights a week.)*
2. Is there any past experience you would like to tell us about?
3. Is there any other relevant experience you would like to tell us about?

Range of experience	Role	Length of involvement

6. *Summarise:* So you have experience of __________, is there any other experience which relates to your work?

QUESTION 2. ***Best option?***

1. Can you tell us why you want to come on the programme?

2. *(Choose one reason)* You say you would like to _________, is there anything about your work with groups which makes this area important?

Motive:	**Example of why important:**

3. *Summarise:* So far you've told us _______. Is there anything else that you hope to gain from the programme? *(Interviewers may wish to clarify for the applicant what the programme can or can not do.)*

QUESTION 3: ***Depth of experience and experience of sharing***

1. This programme works if people share their experience. Can you tell us about the experience you can contribute to the group? *(If clarification is necessary: any particular experience of work with groups – or perhaps your own life experience which you would like to share? Perhaps certain information or skills or examples of issues you have tackled?)*

2. Have you any experience of sharing this __________ *(experience / skill / information / understanding)* with other people? How did you do this?

3. What experience have you had in trying to change or challenge attitudes – or the way a system works? (*Further clarification if necessary: campaigns? setting someone straight? challenging oppression?*)

To offer group:	**Examples:**

4. *Summarise:* So far you have told us about your experience in _________ and that you have shared this with others by _________, is there anything else that you would like to add?

QUESTION 4: ***Interests***

We would like to know about your interests to help us plan the initial part of the programme. The first part of the programme is based on what people say at the interview.

1. What issues or problems have come up in your work recently?
2. Are there any areas of work or issues which you feel are important to cover in this learning programme?
3. Have you any ideas about how this could be covered on the programme?

Area/issue/skill	**Why important?**	**How to tackle:**

4. You would like to look at __________ on the programme. Are there any other issues you would like to add?

QUESTION 5: ***Previous training***

1. Tell us about your experience of training courses and any other informal training you may have had.

Name of course:	**Relevant details:**

Have you any qualifications? *(Clarify that they are not necessary.)*

Summarise: You have been on ___________, are there any other courses you would like to tell us about?

2. From your experience, which issues need to be considered when you are organising good training?
3. What do you feel that we should take into account when organising this programme which is based on sharing experience?

Ideas on training courses:

4. *Summarise:* You have told us how _________ is important in training, is there anything you want to add?

Conclusion:

1. Do you feel that you have given us a good account of your experience and what you can bring to the group?

2. Would you like us to make a note of any special circumstances which may have affected your interview?

***NOTES:** (e.g. lateness, excessive nervousness, lack of available people to welcome).*

Working Paper 6. *Interview Summary*

Fill this in directly following the interview in order to summarise the *facts* of the interview. This is *not* when recommendations about acceptance or refusal are made.

Name of applicant:
Names of interviewers:
Time and date of interview:

Range of experience

Type of group	Length	Role

Motives / interests)

Experience to offer / sharing experience

Experience of challenging

Representation

black/white woman/man disability?

non-statutory / local authority area:

Qualifications / previous training

Working Paper 7. *Access Information*

Any venues which are to be used should be physically accessible and conveniently located for disabled participants – i.e. on the ground floor or accessible by lift. Transport should be offered if needed.

The following information is adapted from the Greater Manchester Council for Voluntary Service directory obtainable from G.M.C.V.S., St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green, Manchester.

A full checklist for organising accessible meetings is included in the **Access Code** published by *Sisters Against Disablement* (See Appendix F.).

Doors

- should be easy to open and close.
- should have a minimum clear opening of 750 mm (800 mm preferred).
- should have an unobstructed approach.
- should have hinges which prevent the door standing half open.
- if glass, should have clear indications with high contrast markings.

Signs

- should be clear, legible, and consistent.
- should have strong colour contrasts (e.g. black and yellow).
- Tactile plans should be available for blind people.
- Maps should indicate parking available for disabled people's cars and information about ramps, lifts, and wheelchair accessible toilets.

Lifts

- are required with buildings with more than one floor.
- need to be able to fit a large wheel chair with footplates.
- should have controls within reach – inside and outside (within 1300 mm of floor).
- should have audible floor indications inside and "lift ready" indications outside.
- should have easily manipulated controls with raised symbols and lights.

Telephones

- need to be under 1300 mm from the floor.

Induction Loops

- to be installed in meeting rooms and public areas.

Toilets

- need to have plenty of space (specific dimensions available in the G.M.C.V.S. leaflet.)
- need to be kept in general use without special locks or used as a storeroom.
- unisex provision is desirable.

Car Parking

- should be located close to an accessible entrance (no more than 50 m).
- would desirably be under cover.
- need to have bays one-third wider than standard.
- need to be designated for use by disabled drivers and signs should be posted from the entrance.

Kerbs, Ramps and Steps

- Kerbs should be dropped to road level at intersections and outside main entrances.
- should have textured surfaces, and non-slip surfaces.
- The preferred ramp gradient is 1 in 20 and no more than 1 in 12.
- If ramps are steep (over 1 in 20), steps should also be available.
- A level platform is needed in front of doors.
- Easy to grasp handrails (hardwood or nylon coated) should be on both sides of steps and ramps.
- Steps should be at least 280 mm deep, no more than 150 mm high.
- should have strong lighting.

Paths

- should be firm, non-slip, and well laid with no cobbles, tiles or gravel and with well defined edges.
- Railings should have a low rail at foot level and should extend beyond changes in level.
- should have stable seats at regular intervals and choice of heights.

Interpreters

- Sign language interpreters can be contacted through the Royal National Institute for the Deaf, local Council Disability or Equal Opportunities Units and local groups.

- Speakers and writers of other languages may be contacted through Equal Opportunities Units, Community Education Services, Community Relations Offices, and local groups.

Childcare

- See Chapter One: Nuts and Bolts.

Working Paper 8.
Checklist for residential arrangements

Date of visit/telephone call:

Name of venue:

Address:

Telephone number:

Contact person:

Charges: **Notes:**

Bed & Breakfast
Evening meal
Lunch
Weekend
"extras"
deposit due
date charged for cancellations

Bedrooms:
number and sizes
  with sinks
  en suite
bring soap and towels?
bring extra blankets?
rooms heated?
large rooms for families?
cots?
tea/coffee making facilities?
number of bathrooms/showers:

Meeting facilities:
rooms available for own use
number of meeting
  Large:
  Small:
Anywhere to display charts?
Extra charges for meeting rooms?
Smoking area?
Flip-charts?

Paper / pens?
Video?
Tea and coffee on call?
Extra charges for any of above?

Amenities: **Notes:**

- rooms for relaxing?
- bar? opening hours?
- rooms which are shared?
- local amenities
- television?
- sports facilities?

Food:

- meals available:
  - Halal/vegetarian
  - Vegan/traditional English
  - made meals like this before?
  - sample menu
  - meals for children?
- Where are meals served?
- how many can be served at the same time?
- high chairs?
- drinks/food available
  - throughout the day/night?

Child-care:

- like having children?
- rooms available for children?
- television/video available
  - during the day/night?
- local amenities?
- What will children need?
  - (swimsuits, wellies, spends)
- creche workers ?
  - experience:
  - take the children out?
  - have a minibus?
  - work in the evenings?
  - creche rooms?
  - staff?
  - equipment?
- creche insured?
- limit to numbers of children?
- charges for creche etc.:

General comments

Working Paper 9.
Residential evaluation sheet

Please fill in any comments you have about the accommodation. The results from this sheet will be sent to the venue.

Residential evaluation sheet:

Date:
Name (if you like):

1. Food

2. Bedrooms

3. Meeting rooms

4. Facilities

5. Creche

6. Overall arrangements

7. Would you recommend this venue to others?

8. Have you any additional comments?

Thank you.

Working Paper 10.
Residential planning questionnaire

Please fill in the following information sheet so that we can make appropriate arrangements for the residential on _______.

Name:

Telephone: Day:

Evening:

Circle *yes* or *no* and write additional notes as required:

1) Will you need transport to the venue? yes/no

2) Will you be bringing any children with you? yes/no

If yes, please give their names and ages:

3) Any special food requirements? yes/no

If yes, please give details:

4) Do you smoke? yes/no

5) Any other requirements?

APPENDIX B

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER WORKING PAPERS

The **Getting to Know Each Other Working Papers** include a variety of useful checklists and exercises to use to with a group to help them get to know each other. They begin with a checklist and sample programme for a first session and go on to methods of mixing and warming-up a group. A number of warm-up exercises are included.

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

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- C. *Mixing it up by Milling or Cocktail parties*
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Working Paper 14. **Name games** **page 260**

- A. *Alphabetical names*
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- D. *Three names in a row*
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- A. *News*
- B. *Coats of arms*
- C. *Voting*
- D. *Beliefs*
- E. *Garments*

Working Paper 11.

Before the programme begins

1. Send a mailing to all participants to include:

   a welcoming letter with a map to the meeting room, parking availability, bus information, and contact telephone number,

   the dates and times of sessions,

   the schedule for the first day.

   If a residential is booked for early on in the programme, send:

   the date, times of departure and return,

   the name, address and telephone number of venue,

   what participants need to bring,

   a sheet to fill in for creche and dietary requirements.
   (see **Working Paper 10**).

2. Arrange for some extra "welcomers" to come for the first hour of the programme - possibly previous participants or members of the course committee.

3. Make a display board in the meeting room with advertisements for jobs, information about conferences, other training opportunities, relevant newspaper articles.

4. Collect information for display: re. other courses, organisations, materials used on the previous programmes.

5. Prepare a folder for each participant which will include:

   a map of the facilities,
   a draft programme for the course or first part of
   the course,
   a list of names and contact arrangements for members
   of the course committee,
   information about criteria used for selection
   (a reminder).

On the first day

1. Put up signs directing people to the room.
2. Put a welcome on the door.
3. Arrange the room:

   Set up a refreshment table with coffee, tea, biscuits (no animal fats), squash.

   Set up a "signing-in" table with a contact sheet to sign, a sheet to fill in about funding arrangements (such as who to invoice), and folders for each participant (as above).

   Set up an information table with publicity and information about the programme, previous materials used, information about other training, conferences, organisations.

   Place some tables around the sides of the room and chairs in small clusters of four or five.

Working Paper 12.
Programme for a first session

The first session is important and will require balancing different needs, e.g. for an unstressful introduction to the programme as well as an enthusiastic and stimulating start. This sample programme includes introductions through a milling exercise, going through the aims of the programme, discussing hopes and fears, setting guidelines for the group, distributing information, and going on a tour of the premises. The time allowed for this is approximately three hours – to finish with a meal or snack. If the session is to last all day, a ***Range of experience*** exercise (see Exercise 2.7) could be used to discuss what the group has to offer.

Aims for the session:

* to make everyone feel welcome.

* to make sure that the programme "starts as it means to go on" with a warm atmosphere and everyone getting the chance to say something.

* to make sure that participants know the selection criteria and why they have been selected.

* to agree sensible arrangements for contacts, attendance and guidelines for the group.

* to familiarise the participants with the setting.

If applicable:

* to make sure that the arrangements for up-coming residential and / or holidays are understood.

Programme

Starting time: Arrivals and refreshments

Encourage people to mill around the room looking at the material on display and making initial contact with each other. Perform a "host" role by introducing people to each other. Delegate some tasks to help people to meet each other (e.g. ask someone to go around with the biscuits).

Continue as an extended **Milling exercise** (See **Working Paper 13 A.**). Ask people as you see them to introduce themselves to each other and ask each other where they come from.

Half an hour later: Introductions; Aims and objectives

Get everyone's attention. Ask them all to sit comfortably and turn to face you (no need to get in a circle).

Introduce yourselves once more (if there are two tutors, some participants will not have met both of you).

Go through the aims of the programme and the objectives for the day.

Ten minutes later: Hopes and fears

With two tutors, divide the group into two groups. One tutor should read out a list of half the people to take them into a separate room.

Ask everyone to find a pair and go through **Exercise 2.2 Hopes and fears**. Allow one hour for this exercise as participants should work first in pairs, then in fours before a general feedback (still in the two groups.) List the "hopes" and "fears" on a flipchart.

One hour later Coffee break

Have a coffee break in one large group.

Fifteen minutes later Guidelines for the group

Go back into the two groups and use the "fears" to discuss possible "ground rules" or guidelines (see **Exercise 2.3**) which could minimise the fears.

Half an hour later Feedback

Feedback to the large group and agree some guidelines for the group and a time to review them.

Half an hour later Tour

Take the group on a tour of the premises which could end with a meal or coffee in the cafeteria.

If the session lasts all day, carry on after dinner to discuss the criteria for selection and the aims of the programme in small groups.

If the group is not too tired, go through **Exercise 2.7 Range of experience** and discuss whether the exercise ties in with the criteria for selection, the guidelines for the group which were set in the morning and the aims for the programme.

Working Paper 13. *Mixing it up*

A variety of ways can be used to mix a group before starting a warm-up or small group exercise. Various ways **to split a group** into pairs or smaller groups will work, others won't. For example, don't say "Turn to the person on your right"; think about it; it doesn't work.

Try some other ways to split a group:

> **Give each member of the group** a number according to the number of groups you need. For two groups, count "one, two, one, two," etc. For four groups, count "one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four," etc. All the people with the same number form a group. This is more successful if done slowly and better still if the participants themselves are asked to count off out aloud. The method is useful in breaking up cliques if people tend to sit in the same places all the time.
>
> Make large gestures to split the group, **cupping your hands** (rather than pointing) and say: "You three people will go over there" or "Will you two work together on this," or "Let's divide you between these two people", etc. The method is ideal for appearing to be random (if you do it quickly) while allowing you to split those you want to separate by simply walking up to them and gesturing them into opposite directions.
>
> **Make lists** of people and read them off as group "a", "b", etc. But remember that people don't always listen to which group they have been allocated. You could photocopy the lists to hand out or send off one group before progressing to the next to overcome this difficulty.
>
> Hand out **different colours** of paper or card so that groups are formed according to the colour of their card. This method can be used with handouts or worksheets printed on different coloured paper or with different coloured dots marked on them.
>
> **Allow people to form their own groups** by saying, "Turn to the person next to you", "Find someone you haven't spoken to yet", or "Talk to someone you feel comfortable with." To form small groups, you can say: "Find two or three others to work with", or "Form yourselves into buzz groups." With a group that is new to each other, this may be difficult, but an established group may not need special mixing.
>
> **"spin the bottle"** is a useful trick for creating random choice. Lay a bottle on the floor and spin it around. When the bottle stops, the person who the top of the bottle points at takes the next turn.
>
> Ask people to **line up, then split the line.** This is a useful way to start the *Circles Game*, see **B** below.

If an **even number** is necessary for any exercise, the co-tutor should join in the group to make up a pair if someone is left out. Most warm-ups require a "director" so the tutor "calling the shots" should try to stay out of the exercise. But without a co-tutor, the "director" of the exercise should join in rather than leave a participant out.

To monitor whether the aim of mixing it up has been achieved, the following warming-up exercise may help:

Checking if everyone knows each other

Use any warm-up exercise which uses questions in pairs and ask people to move to form a pair with someone they don't know very well. Ask a question from the warm-up and then repeat the request to move to speak with someone they don't know very well. Continue until they have no one else to move to.

A. Mixing it up in pairs

Discussing any relevant or amusing topic in pairs to start a session can be an easy and fairly stress-free way to get "warmed up." While not everyone finds likes pair work, most people find talking one-to-one easier than a large group. The facilitator is responsible for ensuring that the group has something to talk about which has an appropriate level of self-disclosure and that they are not left on their own for too long.

Topics for conversation should give participants something to talk about which will make them laugh (at the exercise if they wish), find something in common, or find out something new about each other. The aim is to help the group get to know each other and/or begin to discuss the work in hand without the worry of "conversation openers."

Some ideas could include:

> How did you get started in community work?
> What did you have for breakfast?
> What do you think about warm-up games?
> When was the last time you were in a train?

Or, you may wish to focus more on the programme, e.g.

> What did you expect to get out of this training?
> What's the best thing about this training so far?
> What's the worst thing?
> What do you think we should have a session on?

For other suggestions for topics of conversation, see **Handouts 13 B, C** and **D**. The best warm-up conversations, however, would be about something relevant to the session to follow as is suggested in many of the exercises.

B. Mixing it up in circles

The game requires an even number of participants.

1. The group needs to form two concentric circles: divide the group in an organised way and ask one half to form a circle. Ask the other half to form a ring outside them. Ask those in the inside ring to face someone on the outside ring.

2. Ask the participants to discuss an event, idea or question with the person who faces them.

3. Ask one of the rings to move left or right to face the next person. Ask another question and continue until "warmed-up."

   The last question could include something related to the session to follow. Ask them to take their discussion into the next group that they move into.

   See **Handout 13 B. *Mixing it up in circles*** for an example.

The circles structure is useful because you can easily ensure a lot of mixing, there will be a number of different pairings, and there is movement which helps people to "warm-up."

The structure can also be difficult because of the noise level. You may need to stand on a chair to get people's attention, have a commanding voice and/or clap your hands.

The exercise can be adapted so that one circle move around a ring of seated people - useful when there are elderly or disabled people in the group. Or, keep a circle of chairs and ask every alternate person to move on to the next empty seat.

WARNING: If English is not a first language, transferring the grammar into different sentences can be difficult. You may want to change the wording so that the question is included: Instead of "Ask the person opposite you how she got here this morning." Use: "Ask the person opposite you: How did you get here this morning?" This way the questions will be structured for them.

C. Mixing it up by milling or cocktail parties

Milling can be a chaotic but informal way to warm-up which requires a lot of work on the part of the facilitators. The group is asked to "mill around" and find out something interesting about everyone there. The facilitators need to play the role of "host" and make sure that movement flows - that people don't get left out, or stuck with each other.

Variations or additions:

- Provide a topic to help conversations get started, e.g. find someone with a similar family set-up - the same number of people in their home, or someone who has the same favourite treat.

- Make a pile of slips with questions to help people start their conversations. Introduce the exercise by telling the group: *"Here is some advice on how to start a conversation at a party. Take a question and keep asking it to different people. When you get fed up with it, take another."* See the **Milling Questions Hand-out 13 C** for some suggested question slips.

D. Mixing it up with a questionnaire

Give each participant a questionnaire to fill in by asking the other participants questions. Make sure that you stress that this is a warm-up and that answers will not be checked! The method can be used successfully at quite large groups or conferences.

The example given, **Handout 13 D. *Post-Holiday Questionnaire***, could be used during the first session in January. Alternative questions could follow a different theme, for example, travel:

> *Find someone who owns a tricycle. Find someone who never learned to ride a bike. Find someone who hates aeroplanes. Find someone who has never been in a wheelchair, etc.*

Alternative questionnaires could discover the range of experience in the group or the answers to trivia questions.

The exercise requires reasonable literacy skills; people may work better in pairs.

A short feedback session may be interesting, but should not require everyone to read out their answers.

Handout 13 B. *Mixing it up in circles*

1. Check out the name tag of the person opposite you and ask them how they found out about the course.

   THE OUTER CIRCLE SHOULD MOVE ONE PERSON TO THE RIGHT

2. Check out the name tag of the person opposite you and ask them where they work.

   THE OUTER CIRCLE SHOULD MOVE ONE PERSON TO THE RIGHT

3. Check out the name tag of the person opposite you and ask them what they enjoy doing when they have any spare time.

   THE INNER CIRCLE SHOULD MOVE ONE PERSON TO THE LEFT

4. Check out the name tag of the person opposite you and ask them whether they are an "early morning" or "late night" person.

   THE INNER CIRCLE SHOULD MOVE ONE PERSON TO THE LEFT

5. Check out the name tag of the person opposite you and ask them how they got here this morning.

   THE OUTER CIRCLE SHOULD MOVE ONE PERSON TO THE RIGHT

6. Check out the name tag of the person opposite you and ask them why they like their present work.

   THE INNER CIRCLE SHOULD MOVE ONE PERSON TO THE LEFT

7. Check out the name tag of the person opposite you and ask them what they would do if they won £1,000.

   THE INNER CIRCLE SHOULD MOVE ONE PERSON TO THE LEFT

8. Check out the name tag of the person opposite you and ask them about a funny thing which happened to them recently.

   THE OUTER CIRCLE SHOULD MOVE ONE PERSON TO THE RIGHT

9. Check out the name tag of the person opposite you and tell them something interesting that someone else has told you about this morning.

Handout 13 C. *Milling questions*

(Make several copies and cut into strips.)

a. Ask everyone you meet: Where would you go if you had won a free pass to travel anywhere in the world?

b. Ask everyone you meet: What's your favourite memory?

c. Ask everyone you meet: What do you like to do on Saturdays?

d. Ask everyone you meet: What do you think about camping?

d. Ask everyone you meet: How do you feel about a day out with all the family?

e. Ask everyone you meet: When did you last watch "Top of the Pops"? What did you think of it?

f. Ask everyone you meet: What was the best thing about your time at school? (You must be able to think of something.)

g. Ask everyone you meet: Which would you prefer, living in the country or in the city? Why?

Handout 13 D.
Post–holiday questionnaire

1. Find someone (else?) who knows what Chanukah is all about.

   Name:

2. Find someone (else?) who didn't have a Christmas tree.

   Name:

3. Find someone (else?) who had a really good "holiday" break.

   Name:

4. Find someone (else?) who doesn't celebrate Christmas.

   Name:

5. Find someone (else?) who went to church on Christmas Day.

   Name:

6. Find someone (else?) who's been to the January Sales.

   Name:

7. Find someone (else?) who went away over the break.

   Has anyone been abroad?

   Name:

8. Find someone (else?) who has been ill over the break.

   Name:

9. Find someone (else?) who is glad to be back.

   Name:

Working Paper 14. *Name Games*

A. Alphabetical names

Ask the group to indicate when the first letter of their first name is called out. Then call out the letters of the alphabet. Each person should tell the group their name when their letter is called out.

An additional option can include the facilitator asking questions as each name is called to help the group recall the names, such as:

How did you get your name?
Was it in the family?
Is it a nickname?
Do you like your name?
Have you changed it?

Discussion on the origins of names, their meanings, and the rights and wrongs of changing your names at marriage should not be allowed to go on for too long. At an early stage in the group, a discussion would probably only encourage dominant members of the group to take over rather than help people to get to know each other.

To lessen the tension involved in waiting (if someone's name is at the end of the alphabet they may become increasingly anxious), you could have the letters of the alphabet on cards which are drawn at random.

B. Beanbag Game

Sit in a circle. Throw a soft object to someone else saying their name as you throw it. She does the same. Repeat at random until everyone can identify everyone else's names easily.

You may want to have everyone say their own name as they catch the object the first few times around – but the switch to saying the others' names can be difficult to explain.

C. Names and adjectives

Each person says their own name with an adjective beginning with the same letter. Go around the circle, or "spin the bottle"* to create more random choice. For example, we might use "Kidding Kate" or "Generous Geraldine" except that this is our least favourite name game. The exercise can work well if the group is in a good mood.

You may wish to make yourself a set of cards in alphabetical order which have adjectives already on them. Being able to select from a list may relieve the tension of having to quickly think of a witty adjective. Write the first letter on the reverse so that everyone can select the correct letter.

Lay out the cards upside-down with the first letter shown on the top. Ask participants to select one to use. Each person reads out the given adjective and their name – and says whether the adjective really applies to them. (Watch out for complex vocabulary.)

Other alternatives include using the first letter of your name in other ways:

- Going somewhere on a particular form of transport:

> *"My name is Tina and I am going on a Train to Tibet."*
>
> *"My name is Khushnood and I am going on a Kangaroo to Kentucky."*

- Taking something on a picnic:

> *"My name is Surraya and I'm bringing sweets."*
>
> *"My name is Sarah and I'm bringing saltfish."*

Any of these versions can incorporate repeats so that everyone has to repeat what was previously said.

D. Three in a row

Someone begins the game by calling out another person's name three times in a row very quickly. The person who's name has been called has to interrupt before the "three-in-a-row" has finished. Unless you interrupt the person calling out your name before it is said three times, it becomes your turn.

Depending on how difficult you want to make the game, the "three-in-a-row" can be interrupted in different ways. When someone hears their name, they can interrupt by:

- saying their own name.
- saying another person's name (whose turn it becomes).
- saying the name of the person calling out the names.

(Use only one method per game!)

Groups can take a while to get to grips with the rules of this game. Explain and demonstrate carefully. If participants or tutors have difficulties in speaking – this game will be no fun at all. However, with the right group, it can be very amusing.

E. Who's this?

The "game" simply involves the tutor indicating people at random around the group and asking "Who's this?" (An open hand rather than a pointing finger can make all the difference to the tone of the question.) Although not really a game, the exercise can be amusing if you are fast and random enough.

The nice aspect of the game is that there is no real explanation required and people are not really put on the spot to remember a name. The responsibility lies with the group to come up with each name, rather than with an individual.

The exercise could easily be repeated at the beginning of every session for most of the programme.

Working Paper 15.
Finding things in common

A. Stand up to find things in common

Ask the group to "Stand up if ......" The exercise is a quick way of finding things in common in the group and can be a fast enjoyable start to a session after a meal, or a way to "introduce" a large group of people to each other at a conference.

The exercise can be adapted by asking them to:

Put up your hands if ......

Move to the middle of the room if ......

Smile if ....

Show a card if .... (you would need to hand out appropriate cards. You could use ones with symbols on them or different coloured cards)

Clap if ....

Jump up and down if .....

Considerations about which methods to use may include whether the group includes people with disabilities or elderly people, or whether the participants are used to a more formal or more energetic session.

The example given in **Hand-out 3 A** is one to use at the beginning of a residential.

B. Running Groups

Direct people to different parts of the room if they fall into a particular category. The activity can be fast and noisy.

For example:

Run over there if..
Go over there if..
Meet in the corner if ...

See **Hand-out 3 B *Running Groups*** for an example.

Variation or addition:

- Instead of being directed to a part of the room, participants have to find out for themselves who shares the characteristics.

For example: *Find someone else in the room who:*

- has the same number of people in their family.

- likes the same treat.

- went to the same place on their holidays.

C. Continuum

Participants move to a different place along a "line" depending on their views or who they are. For example,

- Move to this side of the room if you strongly agree with the statement, to the other if you don't. Place yourself somewhere in the middle as appropriate:

  (The topics may end up being like the ***personal statement*** warm-ups in **Working Paper 17**.)

  I love shopping.

  I hate watching television.

  I think that being happy is the most important thing in the world.

  Security is more important than having fun.

  There's been no good music since _______ *(the fifties, Beatles, Mozart).*

Additions or variations:

- *Go into a circle and move to where your birthday is: Start here with January and place yourself appropriately: move here if your birthday is in February, March, etc. . . . all the way round until December.*
- *Place yourselves along a line starting here with who left school the youngest through to the one who was the oldest when she left full-time education.*
- Other continuums could be: the number of years lived in ________; the number of children; the number on their house; from the lightest hair to the darkest, etc.

D. All Change

1. Put the chairs in a circle and remove your own so that there is one less than needed.
2. Stand in the middle and call out

   "All change everyone who ...."

   Everyone who the phrase applies to has to get up and find a new chair to sit in. The person left without a chair has to call out a new category for changes.

For example (in addition to the ideas in the previous exercises):
All change everyone who:

- *has black shoes.*
- *was born in Manchester.*
- *works in a centre.*
- *likes pink meringues.*

3. You can finish the game when you are ready by staying in the middle after an "All change."

Additions or Variations:

Working changes

The "All change" call has to be something to do with work. For example:

All change everyone who:

- *works with young people.*
- *has to write reports.*
- *uses a diary.*
- *works with black people.*
- *works in an office.*
- *works part-time.*
- *meets with teachers.*

The following variations do not involve finding things in common, but use the same format.

Oranges and Lemons

Ask the group to take turns saying "orange" or "lemon" alternatively. The first person says "orange" and the next one says "lemon". When the name of their fruit is called out, they have to change. If "squash" is called, everyone changes.

Fruit Salad

Ask everyone to think of the name of a fruit (or perhaps just a citrus fruit). Call out the fruits to change in a similar way. When "Fruit Salad" is called, everyone changes.

Hand–out 15 A. *Stand–up exercise*

1. Stand up if you cooked tea for anyone at home tonight.

   Now sit down.

2. Stand up if you've organised meals at home in the freezer for the weekend.

   Now sit down. *(Repeat after each statement.)*

3. Stand up if you've left dishes in the sink at home.

4. Stand up if you haven't been home since leaving for work this morning.

5. Stand up if you've brought anyone else from your family with you this weekend.

6. Stand up if this is your first weekend away from the family for some time.

7. Stand up if this is your first residential weekend course.

8. Stand up if you've rung home already.

9. Stand up if you think you will ring home this weekend.

10. Stand up if you haven't had a chance to yet.

Hand–out 15 B. *Running Groups*

1. Go in that corner if you're wearing brown shoes.
2. Go over there if you have one sister.
3. Collect in this corner if you have an "a" in your name.
4. Come to the middle if you live by yourself.
5. Meet here if you're wearing high heels.
6. Group together if you've got the same colour hair.
7. Come here if you were not born locally.
8. Go over there if you like watching "Neighbours."

Working Papers 16. *Acting games*

A. Imitations

Make some labels with the names of famous people or characters. Put one on each person's back. Don't let anyone see their own label. Decide whether noise or speech is allowed.

Ask the group to mill around and do imitations of the characters they see on the others' labels. Each one has to guess the label they have on.

For example:

Mikhail Gorbachev
Nelson Mandela
Margaret Thatcher
Michael Jackson
Kylie Minogue
Cilla Black
Roger Rabbit
Prince Charles
(the name of the facilitator)
Charlie Chaplin
Billie Jean King

Variations:

- People have to speak to the person as though they were the character on the label without using the name.
- Use general categories of people rather than specific characters: a footballer, a comedienne, a member of the royal family, an artist, an overworked community worker, a Tory MP, a hang-glider, etc.

B. In the manner of the word

Write adverbs on cards and ask for volunteers to choose a slip and behave "in the manner of the word." If no one can guess the word, pass the slip to another person to have a try. For example:

slowly
tensely
confidently
angrily
bossily
wonderingly
carelessly
quickly
studiously
nervously
cheerfully
miserably

The group can also add words to the pile.

Watch out for difficult vocabulary - be aware of the possibility that someone may not understand the words and be ready to help out.

The exercise could lead into a useful discussion about body language.

Working Paper 17. *Personal statements to warm up a group*

A. News

Perhaps the simplest form of "warm-up" which can be particularly effective with an established group is starting the session with news. Simply ask the group to share any news: big or small events which have occurred since the last session.

Alternatively, people can write up their news on a board or pin messages on a display.

If the method is a regular feature, participants can use the opportunity to share information about on-coming events or opportunities.

Tutors can also use the method to share their own news, give apologies from absent participants and share any information they may have.

B. Coats of Arms

Using card with safety pins taped on the back, sticky labels, "Stick-on Notes", or large sheets of paper, various exercises can be used to allow people to make personal statements about themselves which are then used as labels or as a starting point for conversation. After making their "labels", the participants mill around and find out what or why people have filled in their labels in a particular way.

Pictures, symbols or words can be used. You may wish to set guidelines about this or help with further prompts, for example:

> Divide the label/sheet into two halves. On one half put who you admire; on the other put why.
>
> Divide into two sections. On one put where you would like to go, and on the other, who you would like to take with you.
>
> Put what you are confident about and what you are most worried about.
>
> Draw up a "coat of arms" or symbols for the things which are most important to you.

Any combination of the above could be used to design a representation of a personal statement.

Variation:

- The labels are put into a pile and the group has to guess to whom they belong.

C. Voting

Give each participant a card with a "happy face" on one side and a "sad face" on the other.

Ask everyone to vote on whether something makes them feel good about themselves or bad by showing the appropriate face.

For example, *How do you feel when you are:*

- *speaking in front of a group?*
- *taking minutes?*
- *going on a training course*
- *talking with a teacher?*
- *starting a new job?*
- *finishing a job?*
- *staying in and watching television?*
- *going swimming?*
- *getting home after work?*

Ask the group to think of other ideas.

D. Beliefs

Like the continuum structure in **Working Paper 15**, participants get into a line to make a statement about their beliefs or values:

For example:

Place yourselves appropriately on one side of the room or the other (or in the middle).

This side if you are dependent; that if you are independent.

This side if your life centres around duty; that if your life centres around fun.

This side if money is very important to you; that if money is of no importance.

This side if you are aggressive; that if you are passive or placatory.

This side if you find it easy to be open; that if you are reserved.

This side if you like going out with friends; that if you prefer being on your own.

The exercise may usefully be followed up by a discussion of how we use our values in our work – and the rights and wrongs of this.

Warning: obviously this exercise would *not* be suitable to use with a group which is only just getting to know each other.

E. Garments

Participants put an article of clothing into a pile (e.g. shoe, coat, jumper). Everyone chooses one that they like and tells the group why. The owners' do not need to identify themselves. Watch out that there are none left over – people may be offended. (You could leave your choice until last – and find something nice to say about whatever is left.)

F. Show and tell

Note: This exercise will require some notice before the session.

Participants bring in an object which is important to them – or represents something important (e.g. a photo, a pair of earrings for a night out, an address book with friends' names in, a present from someone special, a flower from the garden).

The objects are put on display and participants ask each other about them. The exercise can be worked either as a "milling" exercise or with a short chat from each participant saying why the object is important.

Variations could include: photos only, guessing which object belongs to which participant, drawing a picture or symbol of the important object rather than bringing it in, or selecting a symbol from some provided.

APPENDIX C

WHAT IS COMMUNITY WORK? WORKING PAPERS

The ***What is Community Work?* Working Papers** include the Federation of Community Work Training Group's definition of community work and an outline of key areas in community work.

The Federation's definition has been developed by groups of community workers and activists over a number of years. Many agencies now take the approach as their starting point in developing community development policy. For example: the Community Work Accreditation Process, the Community Work Learning Programme at the University of Manchester, the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, the Standing Conference for Community Development (SCCD), the Care Sector Consortium Voluntary Organisations Group (Community Work), and the Association of Community Workers (ACW).

The key areas listed here are adapted and developed from the "Areas of Work to be Assessed" produced by the Greater Manchester Community Work Accreditation Unit. They can be used in supervision and assessment of community work practice and to provoke discussion on defining community work.

Working Paper 18. ***Definition of community work*** **page 273**

Working Paper 19. ***Key areas in community work*** **page 274**

Working Paper 18. *The Federation of Community Work Training Groups' Definition of Community Work*

Community work is about the involvement of people in the issues which affect their lives.

Firstly: It is about people acting together to influence, change or assert control over social, economic and political issues. Community work aims to *change* the balance of power and create participative and democratic structures which bring about control at local and other levels. Community work centres on the relation between people and institutions and decision-makers which affect people's everyday experiences.

Secondly: Community work is about *involving* and *recognising* the skills, knowledge, and experience of people in responding to social, economic and political problems.

Thirdly: Community work must challenge inequalities and discrimination on grounds of race, class, sex, age, sexual orientation, and disability, and encourage awareness of these issues in groups and organisations in which they work. Community work must raise awareness about and confront such discriminating attitudes and practices in individuals and institutions.

Community work is a *process* which links and contains these three elements. This process can focus on a wide range of issues: employment, housing, play, youth work, elderly people, work with women, race, disabled people, environmental issues, etc.

Community workers' practice

In carrying out these aims, a community worker's practice may include:

- bringing people together for collective action.
- developing people's awareness and understanding of issues which limit their access to power.
- enabling people to develop knowledge, skills and confidence.
- creating new relationships between the consumers and providers of services.
- building on the strengths that exist within communities.
- facilitating access to information and resources.

For further information, contact The Federation of Community Work Training Groups listed in Appendix E.

Working Paper 19.
Key areas in community work

A community worker should be able to produce evidence or examples of how her experience demonstrates particular skills, qualities and understanding of community work practice and values. Key areas will be: self-awareness and understanding of community work values, group work skills, organisational skills, and knowledge.

A. *Self-awareness and understanding of community work values*

A participant should be able to demonstrate how her experience and understanding of community work issues and values have influenced her work. She will need to produce evidence of:

- thinking about her values, how they have been shaped by her experience and how they influence her work, e.g. thinking about how her own values differ or agree with those of groups or organisations of which she is/was a part - and how she handled those differences.

- developing an awareness of the values on which equal opportunity practice is based and a demonstration of how she applies them to her practice.

- assessing her own strengths and weaknesses as a worker, e.g. an ability to engage in self-criticism and accept and learn from others' criticisms.

- thinking about how she is perceived by others.

- developing and extending her own skills and understanding.

- an understanding that there are a range of community work roles which may be appropriate to different situations.

- being able to relate what she is doing in specific areas of work to her understanding of the aims of community work.

B. *Understanding of how groups and group work skills develop*

Experience of work with groups should demonstrate an ability to initiate and sustain developmental work with a range of community groups and individuals. A participant will need to describe her role in groups and to identify and provide evidence of experience of:

- playing a central role in the setting up of one or more community groups.

- actively working to offer skills, knowledge, ideas, time and other resources to community groups.

- positively valuing the development of skills and knowledge by members of groups and clear demonstration that her work has facilitated and not hindered this process.

- working with groups to develop the confidence and skills required to define their own objectives, acquire the means to pursue them, and manage without her services.

- having been accepted by groups as a helper and participant in the achievement of objectives.

- following through commitments made with groups.

- handling democratic control of her activities with groups.

- working with groups to reassess the level of her role and commitment.

- working with individuals and groups to raise issues of equal opportunity and challenging oppression.

- making it possible for a group to reject her if they wished.

- handling issues of loyalty to groups, e.g. when the claims of a group come before an employing agency's.

- dealing with the aims of groups which were in conflict with her own philosophy.

- working with groups which attempt to influence the decisions of large organisations.

- demonstrating that her work has not put her in a position of intermediary between providers and recipients of statutory services. (Only when the continued existence of a group is seriously threatened, may this role be required.)

- assisting groups which are experiencing political or economic disadvantage to influence decision-making processes and gain access to resources.

- facilitating the development of consumer control by those in receipt of services.

- developing an approach to tackling inequalities and discrimination within groups.

- Involvement in the formation of federations of community groups and/or alliances between community groups and other groups working together for common objectives. Working to ensure that the constituent groups are informed and involved in decision-making.

C. *Organisational skills*

A community worker will have a range of practical and organisational skills to use in her work and to share with individuals and groups. A participant will need to produce evidence of:

- being able to set realistic goals and objectives using priorities based on community work values.

- working to reduce barriers to participation in groups, agencies and areas in which and with whom she works.

- organising information and making it accessible to community groups.

- using different methods of researching an issue: being able to gather, analyse and organise information.

- methods of establishing a need for action.

- having a range of contacts throughout the community and voluntary and statutory agencies.

- playing a key role in helping a group to obtain funds to support their work.

- assisting groups to find and use experts as required.

- being able to assume different organisational roles e.g. secretary, treasurer, chair.

- having administrative skills, e.g. book-keeping, typing, information.

- being able to communicate with others individually, or as part of a group or community.

- organising information and making it accessible.

- being able to present reports in person or in writing.

- producing, or being involved in the production of, publicity in a variety of media and materials which is accessible and clear.

- formulate work programmes related to agreed objectives.

- using methods for monitoring and recording progress and responding appropriately.

- an ability to manage resources and staff as and if required.

- being able to supervise other workers with positive criticism and support.

D. *Knowledge*

An applicant will need to demonstrate:

- a knowledge of the community in which she works.

- an awareness of networks of support and information and a wide range of contacts throughout the community and voluntary and statutory agencies.

- an awareness of the effects of the class structure, racism, sexism, and discrimination against disabled people.

- an understanding of how legal or political changes have affected her work.

- an understanding of how local government works and examples of work which has resulted in policy changes at local or national level.

- an understanding of formal and informal ways for community groups to influence key decisions.

- an understanding of how the law can assist or affect community groups.

- an ability to share the knowledge which she has gained.

- an understanding of the relationship between the employing agency and community work practice.

- an awareness of current political, economic, and social issues and initiatives at local, national and international level which affect communities and community groups (e.g. decentralisation of council services, fiscal policies such as the Poll Tax, changing immigration patterns and laws).

APPENDIX D

KEEPING TRACK WORKING PAPERS

The ***Keeping Track* Working Papers** consist of worksheets and exercises to use in monitoring and evaluating learning programmes and learning development. They are referred to throughout the book, but particularly in ***Chapter Six: Keeping Track of Progress.***

Working Paper 20. ***My Expectations from the programme*** **page 279**

Working Paper 21. ***Programme Evaluation*** **page 280**

Working Paper 22. ***Self-evaluation worksheet*** **page 282**

Working Paper 23. ***Planning future learning*** **page 284**

Working Paper 24. ***Planning a ladder*** **page 285**

Working Paper 25. ***Identifying learning needs*** **page 286**

Working Paper 26. ***Record sheet for resource people*** **page 287**

Working Paper 27. ***Learning programme follow-up*** **page 288**

Working Paper 28. ***Checklist for analysing a learning programme*** **page 289**

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

Working Paper 20.
My expectations from the programme

Name:
Date:

1. I would like to learn:

2. By the end of this programme I will have:

3. This group should talk about:

4. I want to talk about:

5. I might not want to talk about:

Working Paper 21.
Programme Evaluation

1. What did you think of the structure of the programme? (What did you think of the organisation and presentation of the exercises and how you were grouped?)

2. What did you think about the content of the sessions? (Was it relevant, interesting, what you expected?)

3. What was the most useful or most positive aspect of the programme?

4. What was the least helpful?

5. What was the most difficult – and why?

6. What questions or worries do you still have about what was covered?

7. Were there any other issues raised which you feel need further attention?
(If so, when? – the next session? soon? or later in the programme?)

8. Please add any further comments here and on the other side if you wish.

Put your name here only if you would like to:

Thank you.

Working Paper 22.
Self–Evaluation Worksheet

1. This learning programme changed the way I work in the following ways:

   Some examples of how I have used the work covered in the programme in my fieldwork:

2. This learning programme has changed my views in the following ways:

3. This programme has made me feel more confident about these issues or skills:

4. I still need development in the following areas:

To help my development in these areas, I need to:

5. I have identified these strengths and weaknesses in my work as a community worker:

My Strengths: My Weaknesses :

Name:

Date:

Working Paper 23.
Planning Future Learning

Topics covered in this programme:

Where I will follow this up:

Topics I would like to do in the future:

Where I will follow this up:

KATE SAPIN

GERALDINE WATTERS

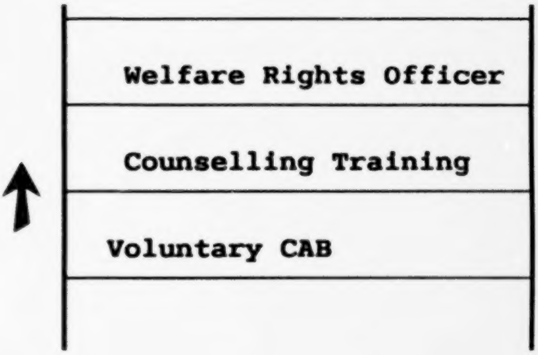
Working Paper 24. *Planning a Ladder*

A planning ladder shows the steps which need to be taken to reach a goal. For example, this ladder shows the steps someone might need to take to get to be a Welfare Rights Officer:

Goal at the top of the ladder:

Steps along the way:

Where you are now:

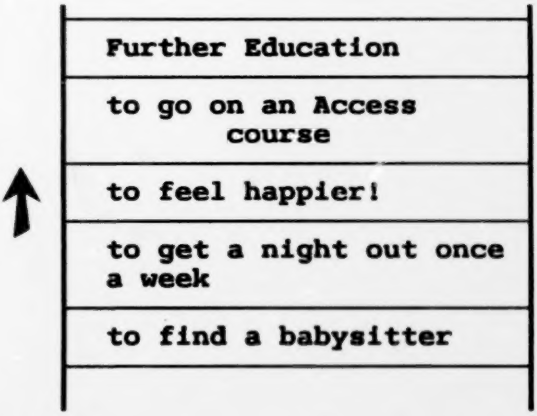

Welfare Rights Officer
Counselling Training
Voluntary CAB

An example of some steps which may be necessary to get into further education:

Goal:

Steps along the way:

Where you are now:


Further Education
to go on an Access course
to feel happier!
to get a night out once a week
to find a babysitter

Try drawing your own planning ladder. Write a goal at the top. Fill in the rungs with the steps you will need to make to reach it.

Working Paper 25.
Identifying Learning Needs

The exercise involves participants in thinking about what they would like to learn – and using that as a basis for finding out what others in the group would like to cover. You will need some cards or pieces of paper and lots of pens.

The aims of the exercise:

- to share ideas about learning opportunities.
- If used during a programme, to plan future sessions.
- If used at the end of a programme, to decide on plans for the future.

The exercise:

1. Ask the participants to think about something that they would like to learn about.

   Distribute cards or pieces of paper.

2. Ask them to draw a picture or diagram of their learning need. No words allowed.

3. Put the cards in a pile, shuffle them and redistribute them.

4. Ask everyone to find a partner – and take turns describing their interpretation of the learning need pictured on their card.

5. The partners switch cards and find someone else to repeat the process and continue until they get their own card back. Then they stop.

6. The game ends when everyone has their own card.

8. Brainstorm the learning needs and discuss how they might be met.

Working Paper 26.
Record sheet for resource people

Name

Address

Home telephone

Work place

Position at work

work address

work telephone

Areas of work that I would be interested in talking about:	How I can help:
(for example: management committees, girls' work, challenging racism)	*(for example: facilitating a session, providing information, helping to plan a session)*

Working Paper 27.
Learning Programme Follow-up

Name:
Address:
Contact number:

I would like to help future learning programmes in the following ways:
(tick the boxes when you are able to help:)

1) Welcoming applicants at interviews: Dates: Times:

☐
☐
☐
☐

2) Interviewing applicants: Dates: Times:

☐
☐
☐
☐

3. ☐ I would be interested in joining the programme committee.

4. The following people would be interested in applying to the next programme:

Name: Address:

5. I would be interested in getting together with the group for:

☐ *social occasions.*

☐ *networking meetings.*

☐ *a specific learning programme on ____________________.*

☐ *an "occasion" for handing out certificates.*

Working Paper 28. *Checklist for analysing a learning programme*

Overall Aims	What were the aims? How were they determined? Did the participants feel that the aims were reached? Did the organisers feel that the aims were reached? Did the tutors feel that the aims were reached?
Participants	Who was the programme aimed at? Who were the participants? Were they representative of the field/community? How were they recruited? What criteria were used in selection? What did participants feel about the level of support on the programme? What did they feel about the level of challenge on the programme? Did the programme meet participants' needs? How was their confidence increased? Were they encouraged to contribute their experience?
Tutor(s)	What experience did the tutors have? What did they feel were the important issues arising during the programme? What would they do differently next time? Did the tutors feel that the administrative and secretarial back-up was sufficient?
Programme content	What did the programme cover? How was the content determined? How were participants involved in planning? How were equal opportunities issues addressed?
Methods/materials	What was the range of methods used? Who did they exclude? What was the level of participant involvement? How were the materials chosen or designed? Were they useful to participants? How was the experience of the group used?
Monitoring	What records were kept of individual progress? What records were kept of the group's development? What changes in development were noted? What methods of assessment were used? How did the tutors, participants and organisers maintain contact? Were participants encouraged to keep records?
Facilities / Resources	Were any issues raised about: the venue? access? childcare? time: to meet tutors? to plan sessions? other facilities?

APPENDIX E

USEFUL CONTACTS

The Community Work Unit
Department of Extra-Mural Studies
University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL
061 275 3523

The Equal Opportunities Commission
Overseas House, Quay Street
Manchester M3 3HN
061 833 9244

Federation of Community Work Training Groups
356 Glossop Road, Sheffield S10 2HW
0742 739 391

The Greater Manchester Community Work Accreditation Unit
7 Broadway, Salford, M5 2TS
061 872 3282

For information about community work in your area, the local CVS (Council for Voluntary Service) will have information about self-help groups and non-statutory organisations.

Community Workers will also be employed in a variety of statutory settings: try Community Development, Social Services, Housing, Youth Work Section, Community Education Service and/or Leisure Services listed under the local authority in the telephone directory.

LEARNING FROM
EACH OTHER

APPENDIX F

USEFUL BOOKS

This list of books is not meant to be comprehensive – but includes some interesting books which tutors and participants on community work learning programmes may find useful.

Bristol Women's Studies Group: **Half the Sky: An Introduction to Women's Studies**, Virago (1981)

Broady, M. & Hedley, R: **Working Partnerships: Community Development in Local Authorities**, Bedford Square Press (1989)

Cuba, Jan: **The Disabled Person's Handbook**, Sphere (1989)

Drinkwater, Jane: **Get It On: A Practical Guide to Getting Airtime**, Pluto (1984)

Ellis, Jean (ed.): **Breaking New Ground**, Bedford Square Press (1989)

Feek, Warren: **Working Effectively: A Guide to Evaluation Techniques**, Bedford Square Press (1986)

Flynn, P. Johnson, C., Lieberman, S., Armstrong, H. **You're Learning All the Time: Women, Education, and Community Work**, Spokesman (1986)

Fryer, Peter: **Staying Power: A History of Black People in Britain**, Pluto (1981)

Gilroy, Paul: **There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack**, Longman (1986)

Greater Manchester Community Work Accreditation Unit: **What is Community Work Accreditation: An Introduction for Applicants; Areas of Work to be Assessed; Guidelines for Assessors and Applicants**, Greater Manchester Community Work Accreditation Unit (1989)

Griffin, C.: **Typical Girls? Young Women from School to the Job Market**, Routledge, Kegan & Paul (1985)

Handy, Charles: **Understanding Voluntary Organisations**, Penguin Modern Management Texts (1979)

Handy, Charles: **Understanding Organisations**, Penguin (1987)

Hemmings, S.: **Girls Are Powerful: Young Women's Writings from Spare Rib**, Sheba Press (1982)

Holloway, Christine & Otto, Shirley: **Getting Organised**, Bedford Square Press (1985)

Hutt, Jane: **Opening the Town Hall Door: An Introduction to Local Government**, Bedford Square Press (1988)

Jeff, Tony & Smith, Mark (eds): **Youth Work** Macmillan (1987)

Kurowska, Sheila: **Employing People in Voluntary Organisations**, NCVO / Bedford Square Press (1985)

Lipsey, David (ed.): **Grassroots Initiatives: A Selection from New Society**, Bedford Square Press (1988)

Lubelska, Anna: **Getting a Good Deal from Community Workers**, Association of Community Workers (1986)

Matthews, Gwyneth Ferguson: **Voices from the Shadows: Women with Disabilities Speak Out**, Women's Press (1983)

Morris, Jenny (ed.): **Able Lives: Women's Experience of Paralysis**, Women's Press (1989)

Ohri, A., et al, (ed.s): **Community Work and Racism**, Association of Community Workers / Routledge & Kegan Paul (1982)

Open University: **Racism in the Workplace and Community** (1983)

Pinder, Caroline: **Community Start Up: How to start a community group and keep it going**, NEC/NCVO (1985)

Phelps, Starlee & Austin, Nancy: **The Assertive Woman**, Impact (1975)

Randall, R. & Southgate, J. & Tomlinson, F. **Cooperative and Community Group Dynamics** Barefoot Books (1980)

Salford Women's Centre: **Setting up a creche** (1988)

Sapin, K.: **Community Work Accreditation: The Pilot in Greater Manchester**, The Greater Manchester Accreditation Unit (1989)

South Manchester Law Centre: **A Hard Act to Follow: The Immigration Act 1988**, (1989)

Sharpe, Susan: **Just Like a Girl: How Girls Learn to be Women**, (1976)

Sisters Against Disablement: **Access Code**, Women's Research and Resources Centre (52 – 52 Featherstone Street, London EC1)

Tinker, Anthea: **The Elderly in Modern Society**, Longman (1981)

Twelvetrees, Alan: **Community Work**, (1984)

Whitelegs, E. (ed.): **THe Changing Experience of Women**, Oxford University Press (1982)

Willis, P.: **Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Calss Jobs**, Saxon House (1977)

Wilson, Amrit: **Finding a Voice: Asian Women in Britain**, (1978)

Workers' Education Association – North West District: **Women and Health: Activities for Use in Women's Groups** (1987)

* How to set up and run a participative learning programme.
* How to put equal opportunities into action.
* How to build up a portfolio of evidence of learning from experience.
* How to organise a residential.
* How to encourage community participation.
* How to promote community work aims and values.

Learning From Each Other is a practical and flexible handbook for busy workers involved in Community and Adult Education programmes, Staff Development and Youth, Community and Social Work. Organisations and other professionals who are developing work in the community, such as: community groups, Community Health workers, Law Centres, Church-related community workers and management committees, will also find this a useful reference and guide.

A wide range of methods for stimulating discussion and encouraging written evidence of learning are included such as case studies, questionnaires, charts, diagrams and checklists. The book contains over **60 exercises** with suggested additions or variations for particular groups and more than **75 worksheets and handouts** ready for photocopying.

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